

REDEMPTION:

A

DIVINE POEM,

In Six BOOKS.

The three first demonstrate the Truth of the

Christian Religion,

The three last the

DEITY of CHRIST.

To which is added,

A HYMN

T O

CHRIST the REDEEMER.

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in LONDON.

L O N D O N :

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M. DCC. XXII.



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T H E
P R E F A C E.



INCE the Poem, intit-
tled *Creation*, in which
I have prov'd the ex-
istence of God, and
vindicated his Provi-
dence against the Atheist, has been
favourably receiv'd, I have been
encourag'd to proceed, and form
another to demonstrate the truth

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of reveal'd Religion, and defend the Deity of *Christ*, the Author and Founder of it. I am very sensible, that many able and excellent pens, as well ancient as modern, have, to their great honour, been employ'd against the Deist, and the adversaries of our Lord's Divinity, who abundantly confute the one and the other, and cannot fail of producing the best effect, were their reasons weigh'd with due attention by an impartial and unprejudic'd mind. I have, however, been determin'd to write on these subjects, and to bear my testimony in cases of such great concernment and importance, while I imagin'd that I might add some force and clearness to the proofs, that have been brought by the champions on that side of each question, which I have taken ; and that I could illustrate and carry them on yet farther, than those
have

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have done ; and this I hope will appear in the following sheets. Besides, should I have offer'd nothing new, which however I believe I have done ; yet this disputation being manag'd in verse, the sweetness and beauties of poetical diction, the pleasing harmony of numbers and digressive episodes, which relieve and entertain the reader, may engage many to peruse these arguments with greater attention, to conceive their force more readily, and preserve them longer in their memory ; whence their virtue, from a deeper impression, may prove more operative and successful. Mankind love to be taught and inform'd in the most easy and agreeable manner ; if you will gratify their taste, and mix pleasure with your instruction, it will be the more effectually consider'd and embrac'd. There are but few, who

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have

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have inclination, diligence, or capacity enough for dry disputations and scholastick discourses : as such learned disquisitions exceed the faculties of the greatest part of men, so those, who are better judges, are often unwilling to undergo the hard and laborious task of reading controversial writings, especially in theology : but when divine doctrines are strip'd from the uncouth and disagreeable dress of the Schools, and appear in a graceful, familiar and ornamental habit, they will not fright men away, but invite them to their conversation and acquaintance. And this advantage the poet has over the writer of prose, that he leads the reader by pleasure to profit, and by delight to improvement in knowledge : and this was the reason, as I alledg'd, that determin'd me to treat of abstruse
philo-

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philosophical subjects in verse, as I have in the Poem abovemention'd.

In the three first books of this Poem, I have demonstrated, against the Deist or Infidel, by undeniable proofs, the verity of the Christian Religion, and have establish'd the divine authority of that revelation by the convincing arguments of numerous and uncontested miracles of power, as well as prophecies or predictions, which are no less miracles of knowledge. And besides, I have evinc'd by clear reasons, that mankind, in order to their eternal salvation, lay under a necessity of a new scheme or revelation of the divine will ; for their minds were so dark and blind, and their habits so universally deprav'd and confirm'd in their corruption by impure, flagitious and abominable practices, that their perfect

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conformity to the laws of Nature, which they were bound to observe, was impracticable ; and therefore the whole world was involv'd in a state of condemnation, which must have been inevitable, had not God, mov'd by infinite compassion, found out a way of atoning his justice, and saving offenders by a new covenant of grace reveal'd to the world by our blessed Redeemer. And this remark will effectually overthrow the scheme of the Deist.

Mankind, from the eldest ages, have felt great disturbance in themselves, from a vehement and constant strife between their reason and their passions ; they found themselves distracted by these inward warring principles, of which they were compounded, drawing different ways, and contending for
victory

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victory and dominion. These repugnant springs of action created in them great inquietude, while they were unable to serve two opposite masters. When they follow'd the dictates of reason, they bore the torment of ungratify'd inordinate appetites ; and when they chose to obey their passions, reflection fill'd them with terror and remorse : and in this sense, it is true, that all men are born in a state of war ; that is, they felt in themselves an obstinate conflict between the superior commanding faculties of the mind, and the subordinate passions that rebel against them.

It has been the complaint of all men, in all ages, *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor* ; which agrees with St. Paul's description of his uneasy condition, while he affirms,

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affirms, *the good I would do I do not*, &c. Though the world was thoroughly sensible of this calamity, yet they were ignorant of the cause that produc'd it, and did not for a long time apply themselves to find out any means of cure, any ways or methods, by which this unhappy state might be retriev'd ; by restoring to reason the empire of the mind, and bringing the passions and appetites to their due subjection ; whence that order, beauty and harmony in the faculties and powers of the soul might be recover'd, in which the perfection and felicity of human nature does certainly consist ; and by the breach and ruin of which, it is very evident, we become miserable. It is true, that for this purpose some precepts of morality were contain'd in the fables and apologues
of

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of the ancient Sages of the East, in the hieroglyphicks and mystical wisdom of the *Egyptians*, and afterwards several good rules of life were interspers'd in the writings of the poets, but these were impotent and ineffectual to cure the great and universal diseases of the mind, and lay the foundation of peace and tranquillity, by bringing the contests of reason and passion to an amicable conclusion. At length the Philosophers of *Greece*, of whom the famous *Socrates*, the sixth master of the *Ionick* school, was the first took this matter in hand. That great man deliver'd many excellent moral precepts for restraining the passions, and subjecting them to the government of reason ; and the founder of the *Italick* school, *Pythagoras*, instructed by the Magicians of the East, had the same at heart, and carry'd on the

xii *The PREFACE.*

the like worthy design, though his doctrines were too much involv'd in mystery and allegorical allusions. But the immediate disciples of these two great masters were much divided about reconciling the two combatants, reason and passion, and bring this intestine war to an end. *Zeno*, and his scholars the *Stoicks*, took an odd fancy, that the passions were not interwoven with the constitution of man, and so were no part of his nature, but the blemishes and vicious excrescencies of the soul, and therefore ought to be entirely cut off; noxious weeds, that poison'd the mind, and consequently ought to be rooted up, and utterly destroy'd; that reason being deliver'd from its enemies, and freed from incumbrances, might enjoy a peaceful dominion; and man by that means might be at rest: and this

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this doctrine, as the only way to happiness, they inculcated on their disciples. On the other hand, *Aristippus* and his followers, finding it impracticable to extirpate and intirely subdue their passions, and being at the same time sensible, that reason too often interpos'd and disturb'd their sensual enjoyments, resolv'd upon a contrary expedient, which was to sink and stifle their troublesome reason, and to set up the passions, and give them an absolute and unlimited sway; and in conformity to this scheme, they taught all men to indulge their appetites, without the least restraint upon any moral account. And the successors of *Pythagoras*, in the *Italick* school, *Democritus*, *Leucippus*, *Epicurus*, and their adherents, struck in with these Philosophers, and declar'd for the passions

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passions against reason and religion.

Hence it appears that they were all agreed, that there was an internal contention between the superior and inferior faculties of the soul, that made man very unhappy, though they knew not the original spring, whence that disorder and distraction came; and not being able to find out effectual means to compromise this dispute, and restore the harmony of the mind, by reducing the exorbitant power of the passions, the sects before-nam'd, to be at ease, took opposite measures; one resolv'd to rid themselves of their passions, and the other to suppress their reason, attempts equally impracticable. But the Christian Religion has not only made known the origin of man's corruption and degeneracy,

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neracy, but has provided effectual ways to recover the lost order and regularity of our faculties, by placing the passions and appetites in a due subordination to reason, and furnishing its upright professors with sufficient means to procure it in great part here, and perfectly hereafter.

The passions are far from being either unnatural or unnecessary; on the contrary, they are much interested in our felicity; and it is the design of the Christian Religion to make us happy by the exercise of them in a just degree upon their proper objects. Immortal Bliss, the transports of glorified Saints and Martyrs, and celestial, ineffable delights are something else than oscitant contemplation, or the dry exercise of reason. By reason we may know
God

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God, but it is by love that we must enjoy him ; when by this passion, refin'd and exalted to the utmost perfection, we adhere to the Divine Being, the Fountain of all goodness, we have then the fruition of Him ; and by the complacency and unspeakable joy, that arises from that fruition, our felicity is consummate ; and the relishes and foretastes of this happiness, which we feel here, arise likewise from the same affections, love, and joy.

When religious passions, namely, love, desire, hope and delight are exalted in the highest degree, and agitate the soul with the greatest vehemence, while reason presides as sovereign, holds the reins, and directs all their motions ; this is so far from being a wild and extravagant temper of mind, that it

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is a most rational and praise-worthy enthusiasm, and the nearest resemblance of the happiness of the bless'd in Heaven, that we can find in this life. It is true, the vehement emotions of monkish and fanatical visionaries, that are not rais'd by the force of reason, nor are govern'd and directed by it, but spring from the power of an over-heated fancy, and the violence of strain'd contemplation, have brought an ill fame upon enthusiasm; but that word, in its genuine and original sense, signifies no more than an extraordinary, but regular passion, occasion'd by strong and lofty ideas.

I contend as much as any man, for the dignity and dominion of reason. I would not believe any doctrine without its approbation,

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that

xviii *The PREFACE.*

that is, which I have no reason to believe ; nor do I think I ought to entertain any passion, for which I have not its warrant and authority ; but then I must own, that I would not out of complement and respect to reason, despise the passions, and pronounce them useless. This, in my opinion, is to rob reason of its chief aid and assistance, and to make it idle and insignificant ; for what can reason do, or to what purpose have we that faculty, should it have no hopes or fears to work upon ? Reason does indeed refine and exalt the passions ; and on the other hand, the passions exalt reason, while, as active ministers, they carry it up in a flame of fire, and convey it in a sacred tempest to the regions of bliss. Thus reason and the passions mutually assist and advance
one

The PREFACE. xix

one another, as the Author of them intended they should do, whence an harmonious dependence is preserv'd between them. The passions are not allow'd to encroach upon the dominion of reason, nor should reason be employ'd to destroy the passions, or dispossess them of their proper place.

Now, to bring down this discourse to my present purpose, it will plainly appear, that neither the *Stoick*, nor the *Epicurean* philosophers did institute any scheme that could avail for the recovery of mankind from their corrupt and degenerate state. Nor was the *Aristotelian* system better adapted to that purpose: for *Aristotle* having asserted, that all things existed from Eternity, and that the supreme Deity was wholly

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xviii *The PREFACE.*

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ly indolent and unconcern'd in the affairs of mankind, that he neither created the World, nor made any moral laws for the government of reasonable Beings; he subverted the foundations of Religion, and all obligation to virtuous actions. Nor have any subsequent moral philosophers, among Infidels, contriv'd any more coherent and effectual rules for promoting the happy end above-mention'd. Besides, let it be consider'd, that if the ancient or modern Pagans, the Deists, had ever form'd a perfect system of the laws of nature; yet by reason of the natural blindness of the mind and moral impotence of the will, and the universal depravity and corruption, that since the transgression of our first parents has overspread the World, no man, as said above, is able to pay a perfect

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perfect obedience to those laws of Nature, and to live without sin ; and since every sin will cast him into a state of condemnation, it is evident, that the doctrines of the Deist are insufficient for the attaining of happiness here, or salvation hereafter ; and therefore theirs is not a scheme that has made an adequate provision for inward peace and purity, which consists in a regular subjection of passion to reason, nor for pardon of sin and reconciliation with our offended Creator. But on the other hand, the Christian Institution has made an adequate provision for all these important purposes. It softens the rigour of the law of Nature, as to the terms of salvation ; and instead of a perfect conformity to it, accepts of faith, repentance, and a predominant and sincere obedience. It

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contains a full and perfect rule of religious and moral life. It affords the strongest motives and encouragements to observe them, and promises the aid and assistance of the Divine Spirit, by whose illumination and influence, they, who with an upright, honest and teachable temper diligently attend the ordinances and duties of Divine Institution, find their hearts chang'd, and their lives renew'd in a prevalent degree: and though that degree is short of perfection, yet it is such, as God accepts, who will pardon their faults and deficiencies for the meritorious sufferings of the bless'd Redeemer, that offer'd up himself a Sacrifice to atone the Divine Justice, and reconcile us to God. It must be confess'd, that the generality of Christians, I mean Christians in name and profession, not in nature

The **PREFACE** xxiii

ture and reality, do highly dishonour their pure and holy Religion, by an evil course of life quite opposite and repugnant to the precepts of it: but the disobedience of the subject is no argument against the goodness, equity, or sufficiency of the law. The revelation of God's Will, by our Saviour, is not only merciful and gracious, but full, just and righteous; and it is no reproach to the rule, that wicked men will not obey it. But notwithstanding this objection, it must be allow'd, that multitudes in all ages, and in all countries, where the Christian Revelation has been receiv'd, have been converted by its power from an evil to a good life, great numbers have been eminent and exemplary for their piety and virtue, and many have prov'd illustrious Confessors and

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Martyrs, of whom the World was not worthy ; who are applauded, lov'd, and admired by all, that are not in Satan's conspiracy against Religion, goodness, and good men.

In the three first books of this Poem, I have demonstrated by undeniable reasons, the verity of the Christian Revelation, against the Deist or Infidel ; the three last contain the proof of Christ's Divinity in the strictest sense of the word. And here, once for all, I declare that I use the appellation, *Arian*, only for one, who disbelieves the Deity of the Son of God, and so agrees in substance with *Arius* in that article, how much soever he may dissent from him in any other. I have already publish'd two writings in this Controversy, one entitl'd, *Just Prejudices*
against

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against the Arian Hypothesis, the other, Modern Arians unmask'd; which I hope will have a considerable weight with reasoning men, who with an impartial and upright mind, are engag'd in inquiries after truth. In both those discourses, I have confuted that sect, by shewing, that their doctrines are reducible to gross and manifest absurdities; but by the disputation carry'd on in this book, I have demonstrated our Saviour's strict Divinity, by clear and direct arguments contain'd in the inspir'd writings; and notwithstanding these proofs have already been produc'd with great strength by many excellent authors, yet, as I have said before, this argumentation being in verse, may not only relieve the attention and weariness of the reader, and by conveying the sense to him with more

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ease and pleasure encourage him to peruse it with greater satisfaction, but likewise invite a great number of a poetical taste, to read and consider this performance, who will not easily enter upon, and go through a long and difficult disputation in prose. Besides, if my endeavours have succeeded, I have put the arguments, us'd by other learned writers, in a stronger light, and in some respects urg'd them with greater force, especially those that evince the Deity of Christ from his being declar'd Creator of all things, and from Divine Worship paid to him, which only belongs to God most high.

Besides God's positive law, which appropriates divine honours and adoration, and forbids such worship to be given to any Being besides himself, the law of Nature
that

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that enjoins the belief of one God alone, must likewise oblige mankind not to address ultimately any act of proper divine worship to any besides that one God. It is evident by the light of reason, that man is forbidden to pray to any other Being for pardon of sin, to offer sacrifice for the atonement of it, to consecrate altars and priests to him, as the great and most high God, or to praise and extol him as the only Maker of heaven and earth, and supreme benefactor of the world ; for all these acts, in their own nature, express an acknowledgment of, and dependence on, the object of them, as one endow'd with infinite perfections, that is, God most high ; and to give them to any other, is, as I have said, inconsistent with the duty of man reveal'd by the light of Nature, and

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xxviii *The PREFACE.*

therefore it is idolatry, or the worship of a false god. And as to the adoration of any being besides God most high by any corporeal posture, falling on the face, kneeling on the knee, bowing down the body, or kissing the hand, or spreading the hands towards heaven, if the worshiper in his mind intends and directs these honours to any object, as to the great and mighty God, which however is not so, but a Creature, or a made being, it is plain he is guilty of idolatry; and therefore the precept against worshiping of false gods, is as ancient as right reason or the law of Nature.

And it should be consider'd, that if idolatry or paying divine honours to a false god, is only forbidden by God's positive law to the *Israelites*, then it would follow, that

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that it is not at all forbidden to those Heathens, to whom that law was never reveal'd; for no law can oblige any to the observance of it, to whom it was never made known by a sufficient promulgation: the Heathens therefore are excus'd from the guilt of idol-worship, if the law of Nature does not condemn it. Thus much I thought fit to say, that the reader may more easily discern the force of my arguments upon this subject in the following pages.

And here I would desire the adversary to weigh impartially the point in debate, and like an ingenuous and regular disputant, to use no subtile and dishonest arts to cloud and stifle the evidence brought against him; but let him shew that uprightness, candour
and

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and humanity that become a person that studies controversy, and a sincere searcher after true doctrine. I desire likewise, that he would not slight the testimony of the inspir'd writings, and fly for light to the dark recesses of the schools: that he would not involve and embarrass the plainest texts of Scripture in labour'd obscurity, and unintelligible criticism, nor confound the Christian Revelation with false Philosophy. I should request likewise, what the *Arian* himself seems to wish, that the disputation may be confin'd within scriptural bounds, and that he would not break thro' those sacred fences to lead us into the woods and immense chaces of ancient writers, with design to tire and oppress the reader with unnecessary learning, and lose the question in numberless authors and citations ;

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tations ; for though I believe the stream of antiquity runs hard against the *Arian*, and bears down all his opposition, yet the question, I imagine, is sooner and more effectually decided by the evidence of the written Revelation ; and by that Light let the controversy be determin'd.



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THE PREFACE. XXXI

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BOOK I.



who have sung, how from the
realms of night,
God call'd the first-born beams

of smiling light,
And bad the vacant by his
Word supreme

With orbs unripe, and worlds in Embrio team,

Then gave his works distinction, order, grace,

Till he had finish'd Nature's beauteous face ;

With hardy wing now heights ætherial climb

To search new wonders, and in strains sublime,

2 *REDEMPTION: Book I.*

Display mysterious subjects, while I sing
The Son of God, the Mediator King.

Spirit Divine, by thy impulsive sway,
Support and guide me in my arduous way;
Kindle celestial rapture in my breast,
That of thy mighty influence possess
Above the Heav'ns I may uplifted soar,
Messiah's glorious labours to explore,
And sing his praise, whom Christian realms adore.

Thou God Proceeding, thou Essential Love,
And Boundless Pow'r, (a) who did'st prolifick move
On the vast deep with energy divine,
And all the crude unfashion'd mass refine;
Thou, whof or ever did'st coeval dwell
With the blest Son and Father, thou can'st tell

(a) Gen. chap. i. v. 2.

The

The dark and hidden things of God, and show
What of his will and nature man can know.

(b) When at th' Eternal Mind's creative call
Unnumber'd worlds appear'd, this earthly ball
From the black womb of night obedient sprung,
And in the air's soft bosom balanc'd hung.
Then did the hills and lofty mountains rise,
And with encroaching peaks invade the skies,
Peaks, which divided floating clouds, and grew
Dipt in cerulean ambient Æther blue.
Now drest in verdant pride, and bright array,
The vales did sweet voluptuous scenes display,
Thro' which the rivers drew their winding train,
And roll'd their silver treasures to the Main,
The store-house, which collected waters kept,
And where the floods, their travels ended, slept;

(b) Gen. chap. i.

Which did the isles embrace, the realms divide,
The Earth with refluent streams, with clouds the
air, supply'd.

Now groves and forests crown the mountain's head,
And painted flow'rs enrich the smiling mead.

The tuneful birds regale their sheltering woods,
And fish, unvocal tenants, range the floods.

The fleecy flocks adorn th' aspiring hill,
And fair horn'd herds the fertile vally fill.

Thus Nature in consummate beauty drest,
Unbounded pow'r, and art divine confest.

Man soon as fashion'd by th' Almighty's hand,
Spotless and pure, was rais'd to high command;
Appointed, as unerring Books record,
Of this new world the delegated Lord.

(c) He did in *Eden's* happy walks reside,
By none, but blest celestial scenes, outvy'd,
A heav'n of pleasure in his breast he found,
While he with perfect innocence was crown'd,
And felt his Soul to his grear Author move
In raptures of desire and strains of love.
To him the groves their heads submissive bow,
And balmy Zephyrs fragrant incense blow.
Streams from the hills, a sweet refreshment, spring, }
To him the floods their flowing chrystal bring, }
Where fish with sportive races please their King. }
Fresh Nature's face profusely rich and gay
Does verdant charms and flow'ry joys display
Abundant, to delight their Sovereign's eye,
While arboring trees and blooming bow'rs supply

(c) Gen. iii.

6 *REDEMPTION:* Book I.

Delicious sweets and scents ineffable,
 To entertain the Viceroy's ravish'd smell,
 Birds, that abide glad inmates of the woods,
 Or sing in trees the edging of the floods,
 That high in air with flight ambitious rise;
 And with terrestrial musick sooth the skies,
 Congratulate at once, in tuneful lays
 Their new-made Lord, and sing their Author's praise.
 The num'rous herds that in the pastures lowe,
 And woolly flocks that crown the mountain's
 brow,
 Did the vicegerent of the world obey;
 And mighty beasts, that thro' the forest stray,
 With a loud roar and complicated sound
 Proclaim'd their King thro' all the lands around.
 See, thus th' Almighty's bounteous hand bestow'd
 This Paradise of joy, this blest abode,

Where

Where no forbidden tree was found but one,
 On man, and plac'd him on a royal throne;
 Whence he dominion measureless extends
 Deputed Lord, to earth's remotest ends:
 And happy had this Creature-God remain'd,
 Had he primæval innocence maintain'd.

(d) Proud *Lucifer*, who with his rebel host
 Th' inglorious field to conqu'ring *Michael* lost,
 Fought with vast fury on the plains of heav'n,
 Was with projected darts of lightning driv'n,
 And chas'd with thunder, till he blasted fell
 From heights celestial to the depths of hell;
 He chang'd the regions of immortal bliss
 For seats of horror, and a dire abyss,
 Where eat in deep, and scarr'd with piercing flame
 He of the new creation heard the same;

(d) Gen. chap. iii.

8 *REDEMPTION:* BOOK I.

Then curs'd his own irrevocable fate,
 And envying man his high and God-like state,
 By heav'n's permission, left his burning cell,
 Where torment howls and plagues unceasing yell:
 He did his wings, immortal strength, display,
 And with angelick swiftneſs cut his way
 Thro' gulphs unbottom'd to the verge of day;
 And ſaw the freſh creation charming fair
 Poiſ'd and ſuſpended in circumfluent air.

Thither with cruel joy, he took his flight,
 And *Eden's* walks by ſharp ſeraphick ſight
 Deſcry'd, and there arriv'd, did ſoon deceive,
 And to rebellion won unwary *Eve*.
 By him ſeduc'd, ſhe eat forbidden fruit,
 Of miſery and woe the fatal root.
 She tempted too her conſort, he comply'd,
 Drawn to tranſgreſſion by his beauteous bride.

They

They fell ; all nature own'd the dreadful shock,
The mountains trembled, and the marble rock
Felt the concussion, while without a breeze,
In calm unruffled air the waving trees
Did this and that way bend with mournful sway ;
The flocks of grafs disdainful pin'd away,
And forest-beasts refus'd in quest of food
To leave their dens, and range the hill and wood.
The molting birds hung down their pensive wing,
And sickning in their rousts forbore to sing.
The flowers their silken beauties folded kept,
And as with nightly dews replenish'd wept :
Rivers rush'd backward with portentous course,
And sought with reflux streams their distant source,
Thus troubled Nature *Adam's* fall bewail'd,
Disconsolate, that sin had thus prevail'd.
Now man perceiv'd his miserable state,
Deform'd with guilt, and fearful of his fate :

Insult

Insulting conscience strikes her poison'd dart
 Deep in his breast, and penetrates his heart.
 His courage with his innocence is fled,
 And pious fear is chang'd to painful dread.

(e) When man, seduc'd, fell by this black offence
 From his high state of bliss and innocence,
 Justice th' apostate's death did now demand,
 Arm and extend th' Almighty's wrathful hand;
 But that the conscious rebel should believe
 Some means his threaten'd ruin might reprieve,
 Sweet-smiling mercy of celestial race,
 Her charms divine, ineffable her grace,
 Before the throne fell on her God-like face;
 And mov'd th' offended Sov'reign to forbear
 His vengeance, and a while th' offender spare,

(e) Gen. ch. iii.

And

By

And now, the filial emanation bright,
Equal in glory and unbounded might
With the blest Father, Light of Light, arose,
And gracious said ; This contest to compose,
That tender mercy may her suit attain,
And justice may not unatton'd complain,
That this mild method will destroy the end
Of government, while subjects, who offend,
Unpunish'd triumph, more audacious grow,
And on the Ruler's throne dishonour throw ;
Fal'n man's deserv'd destruction to prevent
And justice to appease, I free consent
To take man's proper nature, then to bleed
A sacrifice, and suffer in his stead.

This gracious scheme th' Almighty did approve,
By boundless wisdom form'd, and matchless love,
Which

Which would the honour of his laws secure,

And shew his nature just, and good, and pure.

All heav'n rejoyc'd, that God was reconcil'd,

Justice assents, and victor Mercy simil'd.

So oft his annual stages now the sun

Had in his azure road revolving run,

(f) That he at length brought on th' auspicious day,

When the Redeemer should a ransome pay

For lost mankind, and to avert their doom,

By vital ties their nature should assume,

And suffer death vicarious in their room.

Now did he leave his high celestial throne,

Where he coeval with the Father shone ;

Then of his robes majestick disarray'd,

And of the glorious pomp, which he display'd

(f) Gal. iv. 4, 5.

From

From his bright seat of bliss, and laying down
His equipage divine and radiant crown,
He man became, and (g) of a Virgin born,
Our nature did ennoble and adorn.

Unrival'd instance of unbounded love,
That must eternal admiration move!
(h) The Son of God, a co-essential Beam,
An uncreated, everlasting Stream,
Resulting from th' immortal source of light,
And, as the blissful fountain, infinite,
Urg'd by compassion for th' important ends
Of blest redemption gracious condescend,
Free, and by no compulsive method prest
To be embody'd, and in flesh confest.
Who do's not feel the growing rapture? who
This mystick scheme can unastonish'd view?

(g) St. Mat. i. 23. (h) St. John i. v. 1, 2, and 14. &c.

Where pow'r immense, benevolence divine,
 And wisdom unrestrain'd, conspicuous shine,
 Where pity justice satisfy'd disarms,
 And goodness sets to view immortal charms?

Th' angelick squadrons, who in Æther fly,
 And watch the azure frontiers of the sky,
 Look'd down from heav'n with eager eyes to see
 Of godliness th' amazing mystery,
 The Mediator born, the infant King,
 Who to the nations should salvation bring.
 (i) They did the heav'ns with loud Hosannahs fill
 And cry'd ; To earth be peace, to man good will.
 Now a detachment order'd from the height
 Of heav'ns blue Terras swiftly wing'd their flight
 Down thro' th' aerial gulphs, and reach'd the earth,
 And to the shepherds did impart the birth

(i) St. Luke, ii.

Of the great shepherd, who the chosen seed
 Of *Jacob* should redeem, conduct and feed;
 With all th' elect, that to his fold belong
 Of ev'ry kindred, nation, land and tongue.

The vain ambitious *Jew*, who misconceiv'd
 Prophetick inspiration, (k) long believ'd,
 That the Messiah, for his glory's sake,
 Would a triumphant, publick entrance make,
 Like a great monarch, who the vulgar charms,
 With all the pomp of courts, and pride of arms;
 That he would march victorious thro' the *East*,
 And lead in chains the princes of the *West*;
 That he his yoke would on the nations lay,
 Subdue proud *Greece*, wide *Egypt*'s scepter sway,
 And make the *Roman* Pow'r his Laws obey.

(k) St. John vi. 14, 15.

That this great conquerour should their state retrieve,
And power extensive to his people give.

But see, their towering expectations bred
By vain traditions, by false glosses fed,
Appear a dream ; no princely marks adorn
The blest Redeemer, (*l*) in a stable born.

Christ is a sov'reign prince it is confess'd, (*m*)
And of an undisputed throne possess'd,
For God did empire on his Son bestow
O'er all in heav'n above and earth below,
And authoriz'd Messiah to command
The distant nations, and remotest land :
And this dominion, by divine decree
Establish'd firm, shall no abatement see,
Nor dissolution fear ; but 'tis as true,
He did no temporal Monarchy pursue,

(*l*) St. Luke, ii. xxviii. (*m*) Ps. ii. Ps. c. St. Mat. xxviii. 18, &c.
Rev. xvii. v. 14. xix. v. 16.

No honours, no terrestrial splendor claim,
Nor at the triumphs of the victor aim.
His kingdom does no worldly greatness know;
Nor does its strength from arms and conquest flow;
This Prince a heav'nly government maintains,
And o'er the willing heart in secret reigns,
Which he by grace and light immortal sways,
And guides to bliss by mild persuasive ways.
He does no king's prerogative destroy,
But lets them all their crowns in peace enjoy;
And more he issues forth his high command,
Forbidding subjects sov'reigns to withstand,
While no unrighteous precepts from the throne
Come forth, which overthrow the Saviour's own.
The *Jew*, as said, with prejudice possess'd,
Thought, majesty in pow'r, and pomp express'd,
Whose dazzling rays excite the people's dread,
And the proud honours of the laurel'd head

The Saviour's blest appearance would adorn,
And therefore view'd his humble state with scorn,
Tho' then he open'd to the people's sight
Celestial scenes of beatifick light,
And uncontested miracles of might,
That more exalted dignity confels
Than the great monarchs of the earth possess ;
Which miracles the Saviour's mission prove, (n)
And shew it fix'd and ratify'd above.
Else we th' Almighty's justice can't maintain,
We must his truth and faithfulness arraign,
While he, by works omnipotent, has seal'd,
What an impostor has to man reveal'd,
And for his mission has to heav'n appeal'd.

A miracle's a wondrous sign of might,
Or act of understanding infinite,

(n) St. John, ii. 11.

Intended by th' Almighty to procure
Assent to heav'nly doctrines, (o) and assure
The truth of some religious scheme reveal'd,
And by himself attested thus and seal'd.
God is so faithful, wise, and good, that he
Will never to delude the world agree,
He'll never num'rous miracles expend,
Never his high divine perfections lend,
A bold false prophet's words to ratify,
And thus oblige men to believe a lye. (p)

Should not such signs and wonders to the sight
Of all afford a full convincing light,
That they, who work them, sure credentials bring
From the most High, of kings the sov'reign King;
That he does these his messengers approve,
And own they brought their doctrine from above?

(o) Exod. iii. and iv. (p) St. John iii. 2. --- v. 36. --- St. Mat. xi.
1, 3, 4, 5.

Tell us, if God by any other way
Can to the world his mind and laws convey :
Yet all with one consenting voice will own,
God to the world can make his pleasure known
By revelation, which can only stand
On works and signs, that shew th' Almighty's hand.
Now see th' amazing signs, that did attest
The blest Redeemer's doctrines, and confess'd,
That he from heav'n was sent to teach mankind,
Were works of pow'r and knowledge unconfin'd.

The miracles, that did confirm the law,
Produc'd amazement, fear, and solemn awe ; (q)
They prejudic'd the pale spectator's sight,
And fill'd the soul with terror and affright.
Witness the wonders done on *Sinai's* hill, (r)
That did with consternation *Israel* fill,

(q) Exod. iv and vii. (r) Exod. xix and xx.

Horror, distress, and agonies of fear,
 Such flames they saw, and did such thunder hear,
 Witness the dreadful signs in *Egypt* shown, (f)
 Destructive vengeance, plagues, and wrath unknown,
 And thou, red sea, (r) which didst divided stand
 In chrystal mountains by divine command,
 Which by the same resistless word dissolv'd,
 Fierce *Pharoah's* host, and *Egypt's* pride, involv'd;
 Do thou, oppress'd with slaughter, witness bear,
 How terrible the signs and tokens were,
 The ancient scheme *Mosaick* to prepare.

But now, behold, the wonders wrought to prove,
 That Christian faith was authoriz'd above,
 Are miracles of mercy, grace and love.
 The Saviour doing good went up and down,
 And carry'd heav'nly gifts from town to town;

(f) Exod. vii. viii, ix, x, xi, xii. (r) Exod. xiv.

(u) Wild forest beasts have dens, in which they hide,
And foxes holes, where they in peace abide ;

Jesus, mean time, the Lord of Nature's heir,
In want of all things, and oppress'd with care,
To no protecting refuge could repair.

(x) From land to land, the gracious stranger pass'd,
And all around celestial blessings cast :

Such goodness, such compassion he express'd
As might be hop'd would melt the hardest breast ;
And by endearing pledges of his love,

And proffer'd endless bliss, indulgent strove
To win th' obdurate *Jews*, but strove in vain ;
Future immortal glories they disdain ;

Christ worldly pomp and empire should have giv'n,
'Twas that they wanted, not his unseen heav'n.

In every place salvation he reveal'd,
The mind enlighten'd, and the body heal'd.

[(u) St. Mat. viii. 20. (x) St. Mat. vi. 24. &c.

Impetuous winds and waves his will obey'd, (y)

And by him check'd, loud storms their fury laid.

He smooth'd the ocean by his sole command,

And walk'd on liquid gulphs, as solid land. (z)

His word the warring meteors reconcil'd,

The clouds retir'd, and heav'n serenely smil'd.

(a) Demons, who this celestial stranger knew,

Dreading his awful presence swift withdrew,

And to their dark abodes indignant flew.

(b) He rais'd the languishing, and cur'd the lame,

Made the dumb vocal to divulge his fame.

Now cleans'd the lepers with his healing word, (c)

And now the raging lunatick restor'd. (d)

His voice obedient fevers understood, (e)

Laid down their heat, and left the boiling blood.

Distorted bones and members he replac'd, (f)

(y) St. Mat. viii. 24, 25, 26, 27. — (z) xiv. 25 &c. — (a) viii. 28. &c. — ix, 32. &c. (b) xv. 30, 31. — (c) St. Mark i. 40. &c. St. Luke vi. 12 &c. — (d) St. Mat. xvii. 14. &c. (e) viii. 14. (f) St. Luke xiii. 11.

Strengthen'd weak joynts, and slacken'd sinews
 brac'd,

And bad the slumb'ring dead arise (*g*); the dead
 Arose, and quick'ning left their dusty bed.

The deaf attentive, lent to him their ear,
 Caught undulating sounds, and learn'd to hear

Impulsive accents, while he freed from night
 The blind, (*h*) and bad them see surprizing light.

To pity prone, and by soft love inclin'd

To Miracles beneficent and kind,

He pow'r divine expended, free to feast

The faint and craving multitude, oppress'd

With pinching hunger, while created meat

Augmented faster, than the crowd could eat.

As on their bodies he rich gifts bestow'd,

He to their minds yet more compassion show'd;

(*g*) St. John xi. 32, to 37. (*h*) St. Mat. ix. 27. &c.

For see in uncreated light array'd
The rising Sun of Righteousness (i) display'd
Glory divine, which did from earth dispel,
Black clouds of error, and the gloom of hell,
Wand'ring about, he did, with ardent zeal,
Doctrines sublime and mystick Truth reveal;
And unfatigu'd did all his hours employ,
To spread glad tidings, heav'nly peace and joy,
Salvation thro' the Nations to proclaim,
And make the drousy world awake, and aim
At joys immortal and consummate bliss
In the next world attain'd, tho' not in this.
Nor in one only town, one place obscure,
Did he renown by mighty deeds procure,
But he upheld his wonder-working hand,
And stretch'd it forth o'er all *Judea's* land;
From every city crowding people came,
To see his actions, and exalt his fame.

(i) St. Mat. iv. 15. &c. v. 6, 7.

Nor did he shew his Miracles of might
To lands, that had embrac'd his heav'nly light ;
People long since recover'd to restore,
And to convince the men convinc'd before ;
Nor to his friends were his great works confin'd,
Which, like his Love, regarded human kind ;
But he his Wonders wrought among his foes,
Who did with rage his Ministry oppose,
Of truths celestial did his scheme detest,
And to himself immortal hate express'd.

The Magians, who the honour did support
Of Necromantick art in *Pharaoh's* Court, (k)
Did wonders, which in Scripture are enroll'd,
But wonders, that by greater were controll'd ;
While those of *Moses* did with ease devour
The Serpents form'd from rods by magick pow'r ;

(k) Exod. vii.

Whence the Impostors could no credit gain,
Their works outrival'd were acknowledg'd vain ;
Nor could they baffled give convincing light
Against the witness of superior might.

But no controlling Miracles were brought
To weaken those by blest'd Messiah wrought,
Who did in works astonishing excell,
And triumph'd o'er the pow'rs of earth and hell ;
A victor crown'd on vanquish'd Satan trod
The prince of night, and of this world the god.
These tokens, more than Nature's works, have giv'n
Assurance, that the Teacher came from Heav'n,
A teacher, whom his audience did adore,
And said, he spoke, as no man spoke before ; (1)
And, when he comes, what will Messiah do
Yet more ? what greater wonders can he shew ?

(1) St. John vii. 46.

And ev'n by those, who, crucify him, cried,
The Miracles he wrought were not denied,
But of his Glory *Jesus* to defraud
With calumnies infernal spread abroad,
The *Pharisees*, a proud, malignant Tribe,
To pow'rs unclean those Miracles ascribe; (m)
Whence they in guilt unpardonable left,
And of all farther ways and means bereft,
That can convince their unbelieving mind,
And bring them to repentance, hard and blind
Are to despair, and endless pains consign'd.

When *Rome's* proud Sons the western world as-
fail'd,

And o'er the *Indian* Lords by arms prevail'd,
They to convince those nations never strove
By wonders of benevolence and love;
No miracles were for conversion shown,
But those of rage and cruelty unknown.

(m) St. Mat. xii. 24. and 31. 32.

If gold and silver heaps obstructions lay
To heav'nly Bliss, they took those bars away,
And stripp'd them of their wealth, but ne'er design'd
By Christian knowledge to enrich their mind.

When to the eastern realms they made their way,
Corrupted revelations to display,
And doctrines midst those nations to import
Rome's growth or arts religious, no effort
Is made their heav'nly mission to assure
By signs and wonders, that the test endure :
The managers for condescensions plead
On either side, and kindly will recede
From some great Christian precepts, that the foe
May, in his turn, the like concessions show.
In a new mould, they Christ's religion cast,
And form his doctrines to the *Pagan* taste,

Thar

That 'tis uncertain what we must assert,
 If Christians are the converts, or convert :
 Whether the Pagan is a Christian made,
 Or if the Christian has his faith betray'd,
 And grows a Pagan, tho' without the name,
 Or each a third religion mixt may claim.

These sons of *Rome*, who pow'r Almighty vaunt
 Do not the Christian faith in *Scythia* plant,
 Nor *Lybia's* lands, whose natives tokens want
 To make them impious Idol-worship quit,
 And to the Christian's sacred Creed submit
 Tho' here they cannot gems and silver find,
 They see great nations ignorant of mind,
 Who might to truth by wonders be inclin'd.
 Prudent they keep their miracles at home ;
 Nor in the various lands, thro' which they roam
 For profit, frugal of Omnipotence,
 Of miracles they make the least expence ;

Their wonders, where most needed, are not found,
But, where they are unuseful, they abound.

But, see, Messiah sought meridian light,
And wrought his wonders in the people's sight; (n)
His witnesses were confluent multitudes, (o)
Which all suspected forgery excludes.
He mighty numbers, faint with hunger, fed
With fish fresh made, and still increasing bread.
At his rebuke before a thousand eyes,
The Demon now, (p) and now the fever flies,
And 'at his call th' awakn'd dead arise. (q)
Nor did he only once, or seldom prove
By miracles his mission from above,
But by immense profusion of his pow'r,
He wrought amazing wonders every hour;

(n) St. Mat. ix. 35, 36. (o) St. Mat. xii. 15. and xiv. 13. &c. 35, 36. —
xv. 30. &c. — xix. 2. (p) St. Mat. xii. 22. — xv. 22. &c. (q) St. Mark
v. 22. &c.

Still for new works he did new seasons find,
And in unnumber'd miracles was kind.

He did by signs indubitable shew,
That he the inmost soul's emotions knew, (r)
Did the first impulse of the will descry.
And Instincts rising from their fountain spy ;
Did fancy's dim unfinish'd sketches see
And intellectual half-wrought imag'ry :
He try'd the reins, the secret heart discern'd, (s)
And afar off man's thoughts and actions learn'd ;
Thus he the converse to *Nathaniel* told, (t)
Which he at distance did with *Philip* hold ;
And to th' amaz'd *Samaritan* (u) reveal'd
Her life, which she from all men thought conceal'd

(r) St. John xi. — St. Mat. xii. 25. St. John ii. 24, 25. (s) Rev. ii. 23. (t) St. John i. 48. &c. (u) St. John iv.

And when vile *Judas* (x) had his scheme design'd,
He told him all the treason of his mind.

Now if we grant the sacred volumes true,

To Christ's commission our assent is due,

Or we must contradict the clearest light,

And strong reluctance shew to think aright.

All nations long this notion had embrac'd,

That guilt by shedding blood must be effac'd;

In eldest times this custom did obtain,

While hecatombs piacular were slain,

And feather'd, or four-footed victims died,

On which the prostrate penitents relied,

As a sure means their deities to please,

To gain their favour, and their wrath appease,

Tis like this practice from tradition flows,

Which from some precept positive arose,

(x) St. Mat. xxvi. 21, &c.

To *Adam* giv'n, since (*y*) *Abel* victims brought
The firstlings of the flock, and favour fought :
How else should such a rite so soon obtain,
And thro' the world so long its pow'r retain ?
This seem'd a type, that Christ should once for all
Be sacrific'd, who on his name should call,
His system of Redemption should embrace,
And on his Cross and intercession place
Their hopes of God's benevolence, and bliss
Immortal, in the life succeeding this.

Thus had Messiah heav'nly truth display'd,
And the design of bless'd Redemption laid ;
To lost mankind Salvation had proclaim'd,
At which the series of his actions aim'd ;
He by a thousand miracles had shown,
That Heav'n did him a Mediator own ;

(*y*) Gen. iv. 4. Heb. xi. 4.

Had made the twelve companions of his woe
 His institution and their duty know ;
 How to improve, and heighten human kind,
 Direct their manners, and instruct their mind,
 And had his gracious ministry sustain'd,
 Till now it was completed ; what remain'd,
 But that in pangs and agonies of death,
 He should, as was decreed, resign his breath,
 And should his life inestimable lay
 Down on the Cross, and a due ransom pay
 For man's apostate species, and atone
 Th' Almighty for transgressions not his own ?
 That blood no more should be on altars spilt
 For expiation of th' offender's guilt,
 He now will pay for man the penal price,
 By dying in his stead a sacrifice. (z)

(z) Psal. xl. — Isa. liii. — Dan. ix. 24. &c. (a)

Th' *Herodian* sect, a courtly flat'ring tribe,
 Who did Messiah's promis'd reign ascribe
 To *Herod*, with th' invet'rate Scribes combin'd,
 And Pharisees, by *Sadok's* scholars joyn'd. (a)
 Who were before enrag'd in endless strife,
 Conspir'd in plots against the Saviour's life.
 They argu'd thus; (b) We must allow, 'tis true,
 This man does uncontested wonders shew
 Of pow'r divine, and should he still defeat
 Our opposition, and his works repeat,
 Soon would the people him Messiah own,
 And force him to ascend *Judea's* throne;
 Then would the *Roman* pow'rs, to guard their right
 Come, and enslave us by superior might;
 Therefore one man should rather die, than all
 The people should involv'd in ruin fall.

(a) St. Mat. xxii. 15, 16: 23. (b) St. John xi. 46. &c.

And hence from forming schemes they never cease
To kill the Lord of life, the Prince of peace,

Judas at length, (c) the thief, that bore the purse,
And did the Saviour's poverty disburse,

Perfidious wretch, by Satan's impulse sway'd
To his known foes, his Master's life betray'd.

The Son of God, (d) whose vision unconfin'd

View'd all th' engendring instincts of the mind,
Saw bubbling thoughts from their dark fountain
spring,

And young desires first stretch their tender wing,
Shew'd, that he did not threaten'd death decline,

But (e) bad him execute his black design

With speed ; the traitor from his presence went (f)

Determin'd to pursue his curs'd intent,

(c) St. Mat. xxvi 14, 15, 16. (d) St. John xiii. 18, 19, 23. (e) v. 27, 28, 29, 30. (f) St. Luke xxii. 2, 3, 4. &c.

He found the *Jews*, where then he understood,
 Assembled they their market held of blood,
 At a vile price, so books inspir'd unfold,
 Heto their chiefs the Lord of glory sold.

The evening, when this tragedy began,
 The Son of God, as well as son of man,
 In a known garden agonizing lay,
 And pray'd, the bitter cup might pass away. (g)
 Distress'd he groan'd beneath a weight immense,
 As well of man's original offence
 As after crimes; this vast collected store,
 Imputed guilt, to free mankind, he bore.
 Horrors and gloomy night o'erspread his Soul,
 And wrathful tempests thro' his bosom roll;

(g) St. Mat. xxvi 36, &c. — St. Mark xiv. 32. &c. — St. Luke
 xii. 39. &c.

Deeply he sigh'd, and fetch'd redoubled breath,

A prelude to the throws and pangs of death.

In this sad strife his sweat, rich drops of blood,

Strove thro' his limbs, and in a vital flood

Of streaming purple down his body flow'd.

By such a burden not to be oppress'd,

Almighty vigor and the God confess'd.

While sorrowful to death our Lord remain'd,

And wrath transfer'd from guilty men sustain'd,

An Angel, (*b*) purer than the purest flame,

To find the Saviour, to the garden came,

From the bless'd seats of endless peace and love,

As swift, and milder, than the gentle dove.

A sudden day smil'd thro' the wond'ring trees

Still and unshaken by the softest breeze,

Unfading youth bloom'd rosy on his face ;

Who then our Lord address'd with heav'nly grace,

(*b*) St. Luke xxii. 43.

And brought him in his freights divine relief,
 Solac'd his anguish, and asswag'd his grief ;
 That with celestial fortitude inspir'd,
 The tempest scatter'd, and new strength acquir'd,
 Peaceful and firm of mind he might support
 Th' expected sentence of a cruel court :
 That done, the shining messenger withdrew,
 And back to Heav'n thro' gulphs of Æther flew.

When night advanc'd, a military band, (1)
 Their clubs upheld, and fauchions in their hand,
 Th' ungrateful traitor *Judas* at their head,
 Laid hold on *Jesus*, and the pris'nier led ;
 That they at length might reach their bloody aim,
 To suffer painful death and publick shame.

(1) v. 47. &c. --- St. Mat. xxvi. 47. &c. --- St. Mark xiv. 43. &c.

Impious they doom the Lord of life to die,
And tho' they found no guilt, yet Crucify
This man, the crowd with endless clamours cry. (k)
Tho' by the judge approv'd, the raving *Jews*
Our blameless Lord with vehemence accuse,
That he aspir'd at *Rome's* imperial throne,
Who left one far more glorious of his own.

(l) Now was the Saviour, spotless and unstain'd,
Again at *Pilate's* judgment seat arraign'd,
At whose Tribunal by his high command,
Pilate and *Cæsar* too at last shall stand,
Shudd'ring with horror, and devour'd with fear,
While they their charge and dreadful sentence hear.
Pilate declar'd his innocence, and then
Condemn'd him to the Cross : what will not men

(k) St. John xviii. (l) St. Mat. xxvii. St. Mark xv.

Void of religious honour hardy do,
From vile unworthy aims? Behold the *Jece*,
To dire perdition doom'd, a dreadful flood
Of vengeance, due to publick guilt of blood,
Had on himself with earnest cries implor'd,
Which soon the *Roman* on their nation pour'd.

Th' unrighteous sentence giv'n, th' insulting foe
Did cruel marks of hate immortal show.
They gnash'd their teeth, and spit upon his face,
As if our Lord had been the great disgrace,
The enemy and plague of *Jacob's* race.
With pointed thorns in sport they crown his head,
While painful wounds a crimson current shed;
Nor did so rich a glory e'er endow
A Saint's bright temples, or a Monarch's brow.
They dress'd him in a pageant robe of state,
On whom ten thousand servant angels wait,

To them unseen ; and with a vulgar wand,
A mimick scepter, mock'd his awful hand,
Which of the nations shall the scepter sway,
And on the coming great judicial day,
To every man his due impartial pay.

(m) Now to the Cross was the bless'd Saviour
nail'd,

While on his life encroaching death prevail'd :

The *Jews* relentless at his torments smile,

Deride his person, and his deeds revile,

While dreadful signs and prodigies appear,

Scarce was there heard a sigh, or seen a tear.

Only some few the deepest sorrow show,

His kindred and partakers of his woe,

Who at a distance broken-hearted stood,

And saw with melting eyes this scene of blood.

(m) St. Luke xxiii. --- St. John xix.

Great were the pains and tortures of the Cross,
That all his veins and vitals springs engross,
But what were these, tho' sad, compar'd with those,
That from th' Almighty's hot displeasure rose,
Who on his soul vindictive fury threw,
While from the sufferer he his face withdrew,
And plung'd him deep in sorrow; whence he cried,
My God, my God, why am I now denied
Thy presence? why hast thou forsaken me?
In vast distress, why wilt thou absent be?
What are the burdens, which to life relate,
To that immense, unsufferable weight
Of human Nature's congregated guilt,
For which his blood he meritorious spilt?
That he lost man indulgent might restore,
To the blest station he enjoy'd before,

In agonizing pangs the Lord of life
Yields up the ghost, and sinking quits the strife.

He dies; all Nature did astonish'd look,
And seiz'd with horror to her center shook.

(n) Diurnal night did with a gloomy shade
Miraculous, meridian light invade:

While clouds and darkness o'er th' horizon run,
Break Nature's order, and eclipse the Sun.

The temple's pillars trembled with affright,
And the partition Veil, portentous sight!

Was rent asunder, with design to show,
Th' Almighty now would no distinction know

Of nations as before, but unconfind
Would be to every land and language kind.

(n) St. Mat. xxvii. 45 and 51. 52, 53, 54. --- St. Mark xv. 33, 38, 39.
St. Luke xxiii. 44, 45.

The earth in strong convulsions spoke her dread,
While by the conflict some awaken'd dead
Spring from the grave, and thro' the city stray,
A solemn prelude to the promis'd day,
When all the buried from the grave shall rise,
And to their trial, at the great assize
Of all mankind, shall confluent climb the skies.

These miracles, and marks of pow'r divine,
These prodigies and strange events combine
Astonishment and terror to create,
And from the Lord of Nature's funeral state.
Two days he lay among the dead enroll'd,
(o) But on the third, as he before had told,
The grave no longer could its pris'ner hold.

(o) St. Mat. xxviii. --- St. Mark xvi.

He broke with mighty force death's pond'rous chains,

And, active heat rekindling in his veins,

He did again departed life assume,

And rose victorious from the cleaving tomb,

Of to his sad disciples he appear'd,

By aids divine their drooping spirits cheer'd,

Gave more extensive knowledge, and reveal'd

Mysterious truths, that lay before conceal'd,

Or by his friends, ev'n those of clearest sight,

Discern'd but in a dim and dubious light.

He taught them, how they should instruct and guide

His Church, and free from avarice and pride

They should as leaders, not as lords preside.

He never bad his preachers troops command,

Nor Infidels convert with sword in hand ;

(p) Thus

(p) Thus the foundations of his kingdom laid,
And to his friends instructive rules convey'd,
He on his promise bad them firm depend,
That when arriv'd in Heav'n he thence would send
The Sacred Spirit, Comforter divine,
Who on their minds in stronger light should shine,
And teach them every truth, which should concern,
Or them to publish, or mankind to learn.

And now their Lord before their wond'ring eyes
Uplifted swiftly mounts the steepy skies ;
A glade of Æther parting clouds display,
Whence a clear pass between them open lay
To unknown glory, and ascending day.
Without corruption he by death oppress'd,
O grave ! a while thy victory confess'd ;

(p) St. Mark xvi. --- St. Luke xxiv. --- St. John xx. and xxi.

Now see him from the earth elastick rise,
And bound with greater vigor to the skies.
Emerging from the gloomy depths beneath,
The vale of tears, and the sad courts of death,
He cuts the spacious empire of the air,
And climbs the lofty azure mountains, where
He saw unnumber'd worlds and orbs immense,
Thro' intervening space their light dispense.
Empires by hands divine in Æther roll'd,
And which their everlasting course uphold.

And now the Heav'n of heav'n's cerulean height
The Saviour gain'd by unobstructed flight,
Where Seraphs, Thrones, and mighty potentates
Pour'd from the blissful court's immortal gates,
In glorious pomp and equipage divine,
Drawn in array, did in bright order shine.

F

With

With acclamations they receiv'd their Lord,
And the bless'd Saviour of the world ador'd,
Ravish'd to see by the great Christian head
Captivity in chains a captive led,
And death and sin, a vanquish'd pair forlorn,
The triumph of the victor's march adorn.
With shouts of joy, which ecchoing did rebound
From the blue hills and chrystal tow'rs around,
The Saviour they attended to the throne
Of God most high, where he illustrious shone
On his right hand in perfect bliss, and where
The fragrant incense of his people's pray'r
He still shall offer up, still intercede,
And for their pardon boundless merit plead.



THE

ARGUMENT

OF THE

SECOND BOOK.



THE elevated faculties of the mind; its capacity to receive prophetick inspiration; the foresight of contingent events; a certain argument of Omniscience, an incommunicable attribute of God. Therefore to be endow'd with the Spirit of prophecy is a sure Testimony that such a person is sent from God. Prediction of contingent effects and the actions of free Agents are as great a discovery of Omniscience, as Miracles of Power are of Omnipotence: The first as great a proof of Prophet's divine Mission as the last. This apply'd

plied to Christ, whose Testimony is the Spirit of Prophecy. The prophecies concerning him before his coming enumerated and defended: after his coming, his own predictions compleated attest his divine Mission. Those predictions recited, viz. the treason of Judas; his rising from the dead on the third Day; the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem; the spreading of the Gospel thro' the Roman Empire before that Destruction; the working of Miracles by the Apostles. The impossibility shewn of planting the Christian Religion, supposing the Apostles had not wrought Miracles for the Conviction of Pagan Nations. The certainty of the Miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles vindicated. All evidence is fully demonstrative, that is as great, as the nature of the thing is capable of receiving. Certain proof different, as the Subject of it is different. All Evidence demonstrative, that leaves in the Mind no reasonable ground of doubting.



BOOK II.



H' Almighty did to man more
favour show,
Than to his various living
works below,
The long-wing'd feather'd
race, that soar above,

And the melodious people of the grove,
The flocks and herds, and beasts, that haunt the
woods,

And all the scaly nations of the floods.

He plac'd him next the angels, (a) near his throne,
And gave him high perfections, like his own.

With pow'r elective he his will endow'd,
And sight seraphick on his mind bestow'd.

He from his face divine th' immortal ray
Of conscious reason did to man convey,
And spread his soul with intellectual day.

Enabled him to think, divide, unite,
Compare, reflect, and draw deductions right :

Furnish'd his fancy with swift wings to rise,
Search the vast orbs, and traverse distant skies,
Or travel o'er th' extended earth and main,
Gath'ring Ideas to enrich the brain.

Man thus enobled was empowerd to find,
Know, and adore, and love, th' eternal mind,
High contemplation on him to employ,
And heav'nly correspondence to enjoy.

(a) Psal. viii. 5.

His faculties exalted thus could view
 The seats of peace and bliss, and able grew
 By their sublime endowments to embrace
 Moral injections and celestial grace ;
 To feel divine illapses from above,
 And by impulsive instincts upward move.

See too, without the intervening aid
 Of organs sensitive fair scenes convey'd
 From heav'n before the mind can be display'd ;

Whose active pow'rs are fitted to receive
 What lights presaging energy can give.
 God to the soul immediate can instill
 Instruction, and impart his secret will.
 By pow'r divine the spirits, in the brain
 Assembled and dispos'd, can entertain
 Commerce with Heav'n, whence knowledge is ac-
 quir'd,

By visions and instructive dreams inspir'd.

56 *REDEMPTION*: Book II.

The soul, thro' which the sacred tempest drives,
 Th' oppression feels, and with the rapture strives,
 While agitated spirits scarce sustain
 Th' extatick labour and prophetick pain :
 Mean time the body is of strength bereft ;
 Weak are the limbs, and slack the sinews left ;
 While all the trembling joynts and heaving breast
 Th' illumination wonderful attest,
 And own the impulse of the prescient guest.

Behold, omniscient God, and only he,
 Can dark events, to us contingent, see ;
 Hence must prediction be a certain sign,
 That messenger declares the will divine,
 Who by the wondrous pow'r of prophecy
 Can tell the world, what shall hereafter be,
 For should a prophet novel doctrines preach,
 And a new system of religion teach,

Should

Should he prophane idolatry araigh,
Or change the rites, that Heav'n did once ordain,
If his predictions full completion find,
Which to confirm his doctrine are design'd,
He brings th' unerring voucher in his hand,
And justly must belief from all command ;
What he affirms must be divine confest,
Or God most high imposture must attest.
Of this more fully after ; now, behold,
Before-hand Christ, events contingent, told,

As wondrous works of vast unbounded might,
Repeated in th' astonish'd people's sight,
Thro' the whole land Christ's progress did attend,
And shew, that Heav'n did him a Saviour send,
So signs and wonders subsequent no less
Our Lord's divine authority confess.

Not

Not only pow'r by miracles reveal'd
 Own'd the Redeemer, and his doctrine seal'd,
 But prophecies with equal force declare
 His mission, and to *Jesus* witness bear.
 Conspicuous marks of knowledge infinite,
 As well as boundless pow'r, belief excite,
 And prescience, which does in predictions shine,
 Of boundless knowledge is a certain sign.

The spirits, active inmates of the brain,
 The instruments of thought, that entertain
 The mind with all her bright ideal train,
 By pow'r divine mov'd in a secret way,
 As said, may to the soul Heaven's will convey;
 And hence that person may undoubtful find,
 To him th' Almighty has reveal'd his mind,

But

But this will prove an argument to none,
Who this celestial message shall disown
Not made to them, tho' to the prophet known.
If he to others would conviction give,
That they his inspiration may receive,
He must by publick signs and wonders shew,
That from th' Eternal Mind his doctrines flow.

Now he, who by prævision can descry
Events, that sleeping in their causes lie,
Who can effects fortuitous foresee,
And tell the actions of an agent free,
Must by the strictest reason be allow'd
One with divine omniscient pow'r endow'd; (b)
Or one, to whom th' Almighty has reveal'd
Things, which in darkness else would lie conceal'd.

(b) Isa. xli. 21, 22, 23, &c.

Only the mind, all intellectual light,
 Of knowledge unconfi'd, and boundless sight,
 Can vast duration's gloomy deep survey,
 And from his face emit a searching ray
 To pierce the shades of dark futurity,
 Trace men unborn, and future annals see.

Such prescience then concerning Christ express,
 From Heav'n his high commission must attest,
 Nor is it more by works of pow'r confest. }
 Contemplate first the prophecies of old
 In Heav'n's unerring oracles enroll'd,
 Which to the bless'd Redeemer witness bear,
 And, where, and when this light should rise, declare.

When *Eve* God's high command had disobey'd,
 By Satan in the Serpent's form betray'd, (c)

(c) Gen. iii. 5.

Who,

Who, to enforce his meditated snare,
And make it fatal, did perhaps declare,
That he by Nature, like each other Brute,
Was once of speech and reason destitute,
But got them both by a rich garden-fruit :
And to the woman, who desir'd to see
This wondrous fruit, he pointed out the tree.
She argued, if it wrought so great a change,
And could a beast midst reas'ning creatures range,
It might with God-like knowledge fill her mind,
And raise her Nature to a God-like kind ;
Seduc'd by this temptation's force she eat
The fair, but known to be forbidden, meat.
This heinous guilt did God most high provoke,
And thus the guileful Serpent he bespoke :
Behold, I fix a lasting enmity
Between the woman criminal, and thee.

And

And thy detested offspring, and her seed,

Hate in their breasts reciprocal shall feed.

The time will come, when from her stock shall
spring

A generous branch, that shall Salvation bring :

“ He will inflict a wound, that thou shalt feel

“ Deep in thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Thus, as the literal sense does plain appear,

So is th’ important under-meaning clear.

Attentive weigh these memorable words

Of *Jacob*, which the sacred Book records. (d)

“ The scepter shall not go from *Judah*’s line,

“ Nor shall his pow’r of giving laws decline,

“ And sink, ’till *Shiloh* come. Now here, behold

Of Christ a full prediction uncontroll’d.

(d) Gen. xli. x.

For 'tis agreed by *Shiloh* here is meant
Messiah, he to come, he to be sent.
Tho' some, this clear prediction to evade,
Perverfly have a strain'd construction made
Of the known word, that scepter we translate,
But they a rod, and not a mark of state ;
A rod that chastens such as go astray,
Not the known ensign of imperial sway.
But thus th' unjudging reader is abus'd,
For in that sense the term is never us'd :
Besides, that 'twas the prophet's full intent
To signify a rod of government,
The awful emblem of authority,
Rules to ordain and justice to decree,
Shines out conspicuous from the following clause,
" Nor from between his feet one giving laws.

Why

Why should we here th' afflicting rod ascribe
To *Judah*, common to each other tribe,
And which the rest involv'd in trouble bore
More sharp, than *Judah*, after and before:
Besides in this whole prophecy we find
Only salvation, conquest, pow'r, design'd
For *Judah*, whence 'tis evident, that God
Here did not brandish his correcting rod ;
Which well consider'd numbers did convince
Of this once-favour'd Nation, that the Prince
Messiah must be come, and made them own
Jesus the promis'd heir of *David's* throne.

Then see the sense of this prediction plain,
Law-giving pow'r and empire shall remain
In *Judah's* branches 'till Messiah's reign.

And

And now to strike the foe for ever dumb,
 We urge, the blest'd Messiah must be come,
 Since none unscepter'd *Judah's* laws revere,
 The period fix'd, when *Shiloh* should appear.
 Long since the potent nation of the gown,
 Lords of the world, did pull that empire down;
 The legislative pow'r of *Judah* broke,
 And brought the vanquish'd tribes beneath their
 yoke.

To this some *Jews* this idle answer make;
 That blest'd Messiah came, but for the sake
 Of *Jacob's* spreading guilt, he was conceal'd
 They know not where, in time to be reveal'd.
 The *Jews* obdurate unasham'd rely
 On this absurd ridiculous reply,
 To break the force of that fam'd prophecy.
 But of this fact since we have no record,
 No proof, no reason, but the *Rabbins* word,

Who stories in contempt of truth devise,
 And shut against convincing light their eyes,
 This bold and shameless fiction we despise,

Behold, the royal poet's songs contain
 A full prediction of Messiah's reign.

(e) Why do the nations in loud uproar rage,
 And *Jacob's* sons in vain designs engage?
 Why do they ill-imagin'd schemes conclude,
 Which will their hopes and confidence delude?
 The rulers of the earth tumultuous rise
 And potentates in counsel joyn'd devise
 Vain empty plots against th' Almighty's throne,
 And royal pow'r of his anointed son.
 Let us of this new lord, they impious say,
 The bands asunder break, and far away

(e) Psalm ii.

The

The ignominious cord disdainful cast,
 That ties the yoke above the shoulder fast.
 The Lord that sits enthron'd in light on high,
 Shall all conspiring potentates defy:
 Shall laugh, when he observes their boastful pride,
 And all their weak and idle threats deride.
 He'll in his wrath to these destruction speak,
 And in his hot and fore displeasure break
 Their strong assurance of complete success,
 And overwhelm their souls with vast distress.
 Yet I, behold, by my resistless might,
 As I decreed, triumphant in despite
 Of princes, who oppos'd my sov'reign will,
 Have set my King on *Sion's* holy hill.
 Behold, I will declare the high degree,
 Th' Almighty has pronounc'd concerning me;
 Thee I acknowledge, thee my heir I own,
 This day have I begotten thee my Son.

Then of me ask, that I to thee assign
 The nations, and the nations shall be thine.
 Remotest lands shall thy possession be,
 And kings to pay thee homage shall agree.
 They, who are hard and disobedient found,
 Thou'lt with a rod of iron deeply wound;
 Not only make them sharp affliction bear,
 But dash and break them, like a potters ware.
 Therefore, ye princes, wise instructions learn,
 And truth, ye judges of the earth, discern:
 Then serve the Lord with fear, and hear his voice,
 Mindful at once to tremble, and rejoyce.
 Salute the Son, lest you his anger raise,
 And then should perish in your impious ways,
 Ev'n when his kindling wrath but little glows;
 They triumph, who in him their trust repose.

(f) My foes, like greedy dogs, with rage abound;
 Assemble, and insulting me around,
 The wicked, who inclose me with their bands,
 Behold, in rage have pierc'd my feet and hands ;
 I tell my bones distorted from their place,
 While godless scoffers stare me in the face.
 Among their troop my garments they divide, (g)
 And, whose shall be my vest, by lot decide.
 The mockers gave me bitter gall for meat, (h)
 And vinegar to quench my thirst and heat ;
 (i) Thou from the holds of death shall set me free,
 Nor let thy holy one corruption see.

(k) The Lord most high my Lord did thus be-
 speak,
 Sit thou at my right hand 'till I shall break

(f) Psal. xxii. 16, 17. — (g) Psal. xxii. 18. — (h) Psal. lxix. 21.
 (i) Psal. xvi. 9, 10. — (k) Psal. cx. 1.

Opposers, o'er the nations make thee head,
And on thy foes thy foot-stool bid thee tread.

(*l*) Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear,
A wondrous Son, and shall his name declare
Immanuel, God with us: who cannot see
The light of this convincing prophecy?

(*m*) He for our sins was wounded, nor refus'd
For our transgressions sorely to be bruised:
He of our peace the chastisement endur'd,
And by his healing stripes we all are cur'd.
All we, like wand'ring sheep, have gone astray,
And turn'd aside to our own crooked way,
And God the crimes of all on him did lay,
He pour'd his soul out unto death, behold
He was with heinous criminals enroll'd;

(*l*) Isa. vii. 14. (*m*) Isa. liii. 5, 6, 12.

Compassionate the sins of many bore,
And for transgressors mercy did implore.

Illustrious *Daniel* ⁽ⁿ⁾ in so strong a light
Display'd the Saviour to the reader's sight
That *Porphyr*, a learned Pagan sage,
Believ'd his book wrote in a later age,
And by imposture to the scriptures joyn'd,
That Christian faith might thence full credit find.
This prophet has declar'd the destin'd year. ^(o)
When the Messiah promis'd should appear;
That under heavy suff'rings he should groan,
And be cut off for sins, but not his own.
On this prediction, he that is intent
Will to the Christian scheme soon give assent,
Or shew a hard impenetrable mind,
To which no reason can admission find.

⁽ⁿ⁾ Dan. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27. ^(o) *ibid.*

(p) Thou *Bethlehem Ephrata*, see, tho' thou art
 Of *Judah's* thousands but a little part,
 From thee shall come a prince, whose regal sway
 The subject tribes of *Israel* shall obey ;
 Whose goings forth have ever been of old,
 From ages not by numbers to be told.

By all the sacred prophecies 'tis plain,
 That while the second temple did remain
 Messiah should be born ; then is it clear,
 That he the Lord Redeemer must appear
 Before the *Roman* legions had effac'd
 Strong *Sion's* tow'rs, and laid her temple waste.

(q) Behold, I'll send my messenger, and he
 Before me shall prepare the way ; and see,

(p) Mich. v. 2. — (q) Mal. iii. 1.

The Lord you seek, and earnestly demand,
 Shall quickly come, and in his temple stand,
 The angel of the covenant, in whom
 You boast, the Lord of hosts says, he shall come.
 (r) Behold, thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once
 I, to confirm my covenant, pronounce,
 It is a little while, and I will shake
 The heav'ns, and make the land and ocean quake,
 I'll shake all realms, and then the person, whom
 All nations look for and desire, shall come ;
 And I the Lord of armies thus declare,
 I'll with my glory fill this house of pray'r.

And as these previous prophecies evince
 By light celestial, that the Lord, the prince
 Messiah must be come, and plain declare
 That Christ is he, to whom they witness bear,

(r) Haggai ii. 6, 7, 9.

So

So when he came, predictions of his own
Completed make his heav'nly mission known.

He did not only *Judas* purpose learn, (f)
And treason hatching in his breast discern,
But to the rest th' apostate's heart display'd,
And said by whom their Lord should be betray'd,
He by unerring prophecy foretold, (r)
The conqu'ring grave should him a captive hold
Till the third day, (u) when he would victor rise
The living object of their wond'ring eyes,
And death for ever vanquish'd then despise.

He in a lofty figur'd stile, behold,
The destin'd fall of *Sion*, thus foretold: (x)

(f) Mat. xxvii. 21, 23, 25. --- (r) John ii. 19, 21. --- (u) Mat. xii.
40. --- (x) Mat. xxiv.

Uproar and tumults shall the world embroil,
And fierce invaders wealthy lands despoil ;
Arm'd nations now with nations shall engage,
And realm with realm contend in deadly rage :
Now wars and warlike humours shall prevail,
And sons shall fathers, fathers sons assail :
Amazing signs to that tremendous day
Of wrath divine a prelude shall display
Appearances astonishing to sight,
And prodigies unknown the world shall fright :
Nature shall lie in agonies oppress'd,
While tempests from the hills their bowels wrest,
While unexampled wonders men surprize,
And earthquakes shake the ground, and storms the
skies :
Vast tribulation, such as ne'er before
The world beheld, and shall behold no more.

Famine

Famine shall kill the master with the slave,
 And empty crowded towns, to glut the grave:
 Fierce pestilence by want and slaughter bred,
 And armies, raging captains at their head,
 Shall desolations's howling empire spread.
 Hot burning flames, and deaths malignant, known
 By purple marks, proud monarchs shall dethrone,
 And with like rage the people shall consume,
 And fill with pale inhabitants the tomb.
 (y) Yet greater plagues, false prophets, shall arise,
 And Christs pretended, who with specious lies
 And feign'd illusive signs shall draw aside
 Unstable minds, that can't the test abide.
 When you th' unhallow'd desolation see,
 Foretold in *Daniel's* solemn prophecy, (z)
 When armies shall prophane the sacred ground,
 And there encamp'd *Jerusalem* surround,

(y) St. Mat. xxiv. --- (z) Dan. ix. 27.

Let my disciples to the mountains fly,
And in the hills and shelt'ring forests lie,
Till this amazing storm be overblown,
That shall destroy this execrable town,
Left undistinguish'd they remain consum'd,
With *Jews* obdurate to destruction doom'd.

Now prodigies and wonders shall appear,
And shew the city's certain ruin near.
Behold, the Saviour comes, and rolls on high,
Born on the clouds, the chariots of the sky,
In glory, wrathful, majesty, and pow'r,
The city's pride and splendor to devour.
The sun shall be effac'd by gloomy night,
And turn'd to blood the dreadful moon shall fright
Pale gazers on, and from the shaken spheres
The falling stars shall cause resistless fears.

An-

Angels his servants at their Lord's command
 Shall this and that way fly, and search the land
 With watchful care, his followers to collect,
 And from unrival'd vengeance to protect.

When he beheld the temple's sacred towers
 And wond'rous height, he said; by foreign powers
 This mighty work, this venerable pile,
 Consum'd by flame, shall lie in ruins vile;
 So perfectly her frame shall be effac'd,
 You'll see no stone upon another plac'd. (a)

Now, that th' events fell out, as he foretold,
 Is evident in records uncontroll'd
 When thro' his azure road the circling sun
 Twice twenty times his annual race had run

(a) St. Mark xiii. 2.

No power predicted vengeance could avert;
By *Roman* legions see the town begirt.

Before the war, which desolation brought
On *Salem*, so their great historian wrote,
These prodigies were in *Judea* known;
In the fam'd feast of bread unleaven'd shone
Between the temple and the altar, bright
As middle day, a glory spread by night.
Besides, a cow, which was a victim led,
In the same days of unfermented bread,
Did in the temple, crowds astonish'd saw,
Bring forth a lamb in breach of Nature's law.

The sacred temple's brazen eastern gate,
Immense of size, and of prodigious weight,

Which

Which twice ten vig'rous hands could scarce display,
Spontaneous open'd, and unfolded lay.

Red balls of fire hung kindled in the air,
And meteors frightful, with portentous hair
Glaring eruption, trail'd their lighted train
Along the clouds, and swept the azure plain.

Chariots of iron, at the fall of day,
And armies, drawn in terrible array,
Encamp'd on high o'er *Sion's* head appear, '

Prefaging final desolation near;
While voices strange by day, and cries by night,
Attending *Levites* in the temple fright,
Who did to see the trembling fabrick start,
And heard that dreadful voice, *come let us hence*

depart.

Besides a whole year's space a blazing star,
Form'd like a sword, proclaim'd approaching war,

And

And by its glitt'ring point directed down,
Denounc'd destruction to the impious town.

While now the *Roman* eagles, on their prey
Intent, before the place their wings display;
Intestine fury and th' invader's arms
Alternate shake her tow'rs with fierce alarms.
Without the walls, vast armies spread the plain,
Within, contention, war, and uproar reign.

Ev'n when the *Roman* engines shook their wall,
And mutual safety did for concord call
Courage and force united, to remove
The common foe; the tribes distracted strove
With rage and hate immortal, to destroy
Each others lives, and did so long employ
Th' intestine sword, that, see, a purple flood
Rolls thro' the drains, and fills the trench with blood,

The boldest words want force to represent
This scene of mingled guilt and punishment,
Of self-revenging crimes, and dreadful fight,
Which made the generous foe, mankind's delight,
So nam'd in *Rome*, break forth in tears, to see
Such civil rage and boundless cruelty;
Nor could his fam'd humanity prevent
A nation's fall, on their own ruin bent.

While *Titus* thus succeeded, and prevail'd
On the steep fortrefs, which he last assail'd,
A flaming firebrand by a vulgar hand,
Against the valiant leader's high command,
As to fulfil the prophecy inspir'd,
Projected fasten'd, and the temple fir'd.
While the great chief, to save the wondrous frame,
With fruitless labour strove to stop the flame.

Thus *Sion*, once with strength and glory crown'd,
Of God most high the residence renown'd,
Is, as foretold, laid desolate and waste,
O'er which the plough, as o'er a field, has past.

When *Julian* with infernal malice fill'd,
Aided the *Jew*, the temple to rebuild,
That men might hence the prophecies deride,
He arts in vain, and pow'r imperial tried;
For fires prodigious breaking from below
Th' apostate's impious project overthrow;
The workman's labour and his engines burn,
And *Sion's* old foundations overturn;
All which the Saviour's prophecy attest,
That not one stone should on another rest.

He did before-hand to th' apostles shew,
That, like their Lord, they should great wonders do,
And soon th' event prov'd his prediction true.
And after Christ's ascension to his throne
In heav'n, where he in bliss eternal shone,
All his predictions promissory, crown'd
With clear completion, infidels confound.
Now on th' apostles congregated, see,
Th' expected pure-proceeding Deity, (b)
Gracious descending from the regions blest,
In cloven tongues of fire did on them rest ;
Whence foreign languages, before unknown,
Th' apostles spake, as ready as their own,
By which they might convey Christ's high com-
mands,
And propagate his gospel thro' the lands.

(b) St. Mat. iii. 11. --- St. John. xiv, 16, 17, 26. xv. 26. xvi. 7. &c.
--- Act. i. 8, 9, 10. --- Acts ii. 2, 3, 4, and 14.

This gift of tongues miraculous amaz'd
The hearers, whence they on th' apostles gaz'd,
As messengers with pow'r divine inspir'd,
Which to their doctrine soon belief acquir'd.
This sacred Spirit, Comforter divine,
Their crude and dark conceptions did refine,
Their prepossessions by his light remov'd,
Their faith extended, and their zeal improv'd.
Peter no more the Saviour-Lord denied,
But preach'd him boldly, boldly for him died.
Now all their doubts dispell'd, his friends esteem
Him the true King, that *Israel* should redeem.
With miracles astonishing to sight,
Awful profusion of eternal might,
Majestick greatness and celestial state,
That in the mind belief divine create,
Th' Evangelists his heralds Christ proclaim
The Mediator-King, and zealous aim

To spread his heav'nly empire o'er the lands,
 And make mankind revere his high commands.
 Behold, resistless with a word they speak
 Health to the sick, and vigor to the weak. (c)
 They now remove sharp pains, and ling'ring now,
 The lame with feet, with eyes the blind endow.
 Fevers by them rebuk'd call'd in their flame,
 Torment grew easy, and distraction tame.
 Demons, unclean infernal spirits, who
 The pow'r resistless of th' apostles knew,
 From men possess'd, and by their presence flew.
 Departed life at their command return'd,
 And vital flame extinct rekindling burn'd.
 The dead awaken'd lift their wond'ring eyes;
 Surpris'd themselves, they all around surprize.
 Wild beasts fierce Nature at their word dismiss'd,
 Poisons grew mild, and harmless serpents hiss'd.

(c) *Chaili, 2. &c. v. 5. &c.*

These wondrous works of pow'r divine and skill,
Which the blest Saviour's prophecy fulfill,
An awful train of miracles of might,
Confirm'd their Gospel, and diffus'd its light. (d)

See, an obscure, unletter'd, needy band
Of fishermen with fearless courage stand
In presence of the mighty and the great,
And plac'd before the tyrant's judgment seat,
With unconsider'd words, and eloquence
Inspir'd by heav'n, make such a just defence,
That while the prisoners did undaunted look,
Their guilty judges oft with terror shook. (e)

Could men so low and abject ever dream,
Of undertaking to concert a scheme

(d) Acts v. 12, 13, 16. &c. --- 29. &c. Act. viii. 6, 7. &c. Act. vii. 8.
ix. 33, 34, 36. &c. Act. iv. 6, 7. &c. Act. vii. --- xiv. 8. &c. xvi. 16, &c.
--- xx. 9. &c. (e) ch. xxiv. 26. --- xxviii. 3, 4, 5, 6.

How to atone the just eternal mind
 By sin offended, and redeem mankind?
 Grant that of this high task they could have thought,
 Immensely from their humble sphere remote,
 Could they without the science of the schools,
 Unpractis'd in disputes, and in the rules
 Of arts persuasive, nor for parts renown'd
 Make their unpolish'd foolishness confound
Athenian wits, of vast esteem possess,
 And triumph o'er the wisdom of the east?
 Yet, see, without th' endowments of a mind
 By nature happy, or in schools refin'd,
 These fishermen celestial light display,
 Convert the realms, and make them Christ obey.
 They their new doctrines prevalent dispense,
 Not by the sword, but by the eloquence
 Of miracles divine, and wond'rous signs,
 Which to belief th' astonish'd soul inclines.

And

And as entirely destitute of art,
 And subtile means, they did the world convert,
 So did they poor, without a friend or home,
 As fugitives, thro' heathen kingdoms roam,
 Where they, in spite of arm'd invet'rate foes,
 Great kings and princes, who against them rose,
 With zeal heroick, ignorant of dread,
 Did thro' the nations Christ's Religion spread;
 Nor could the terrors of tyrannick might
 Controll the progress of their heav'nly light:
 Nor all th' united pow'rs of earth and hell
 Of truth divine these naked champions quell.
 Boldly unhallow'd idols they assail'd,
 Contemn'd they conquer'd, and unarm'd prevail'd.

Besides the doctrines, which th' apostles taught,
 Against the heathen's darling vices fought,

Enjoy-

Enjoyn'd them to extinguish wanton fires,
 Hate, envy, pride, and covetous desires;
 To make reproach, contempt, and scorn their choice,
 Triumph in prisons, and in want rejoyce;
 Of pleasures wealth and pow'r their farewell take,
 And lay down life for a strange teacher's sake;
 A teacher, who, as his apostles told,
 'Midst heinous malefactors was enroll'd,
 And sentenc'd by the rulers of the state
 Met on the cross an ignominious fate.
 Say, does it not all possibility
 Surpass, that pagan nations should agree
 Their ancient gods, and vices to denie,
 And for a new Religion chuse to die,
 On the bare word of a few wand'ers, who
 Produc'd no proof, that what they taught was true.
 Hence is it certain, that th' apostles wrought
 Wonders, and signs miraculous, that brought

Convincing light from heav'n, that God had seal'd,
 And ratify'd his Truth by them reveal'd;
 Or else the Deist will be forc'd to grant,
 That an effect do's no efficient want.

Thus did the preachers of the Christian creed
 Thro' the wide *Roman* monarchy succeed,
 And the foundations of Christ's empire laid,
 E'er yet the conqu'ring eagles were display'd
 In *Palestine*, or *Sion Rome* obey'd: (f)

Now this event does uncontested shew
 The bless'd Redeemer's fam'd prediction true,
 Who, pointing to the stately temple, said,
 That thro' the world the Gospel should be spread,
 E'er yet the *Roman's* unresisted sword
 Should of *Judeah's* city make him Lord,

(f) St. Mat. xxiv. 14. --- St. Mark xiii. 10.

When he his valiant legions should employ
Her lofty walls and buildings to destroy.

Now to the proofs unprejudic'd attend,
By which those facts, as certain, we defend.
Some disputants absurd and obstinate
For evidence decisive in debate ;
Whate'er the subject is, demand a light
Perceptible, as object of the sight ;
And mathematick demonstration want
For all conclusions they are pleas'd to grant.
Ridiculous! can those half-scholars find
In sciences and arts of different kind,
No different methods to convince the mind ?

The sciences and arts, to all it's known,
Claim principles distinguish'd of their own,

Whence

Whence for assent we various topicks use,
And different ways of demonstration chuse.
Do mariners to *Indian* isles by force
Of metaphysick doctrines steer their course?
Or do the sons of *Æsculapian* art,
Who, to recover health, wise rules impart,
The compass take, and mark the fluid blood,
That thus a fever may be understood?
Do lawyers plead from *Euclid* at the bar?
Do chiefs by *Plato's* notions govern war?
Or statesmen in the art of ruling skill'd
Their schemes of empire by *Vitruvius* build?
No, each of these have precepts of their own,
And principles distinct, from which alone
Their consequent deductions true appear,
Nor can be made by foreign maxims clear.
What point soever you your subject make,
The method you to gain conviction take,

If

If it be proper, evident, and all
 For which the subject in debate can call,
 Is scientifick, while it leaves behind
 No ground or cause of doubting in the mind.
 Such proofs as these all reas'ning men account
 To mathematick certainty amount :
 For what can *Euclid*, what can *Newton* prove
 More plain, than he, who do's all doubt remove
 From whatsoever springs our notions flow,
 If we are certain, can we more be so ?
 Or more assur'd than sure ? can certainty
 Be more or less, and differ in degree ?
 Then if by moral mediums we can shew
 The Gospel signs and miracles are true,
 No geometrick maxims can procure
 Fuller assent, and more the mind secure.

We may by certain testimony know,
That near the rising sun rich spices grow;
That celebrated *Rome* does row'ring stand,
And fam'd *Milano* in *Hesperia's* land;
That there's a new found world *America*,
Tho' we these lands and cities never saw.
This is affirm'd by millions, who have been
In all those realms; and have those cities seen,
By commerce drawn, or curious to explore
People and lands unvisited before.
Nor can the strongest scientifick light
More help the mind to form conclusions right.
For where's the man, who can a cause assign,
That could prevail with millions to combine,
A lye, that serves no purpose, to invent,
Of which not one did ever yet repent?

This

This would transcend, as all men must agree,
 The reach of moral possibility,
 And would subvert right reason's strictest laws,
 By owning an effect without a cause.

The certainty, which from such proof we draw,
 Of things existent, which we never saw,
 Is notwithstanding founded on the sense
 Of sight, an uncontested evidence,
 Tho' not our own, of multitudes immense;
 Whose witness must in cases be believ'd,
 In which they can't deceive, nor be deceiv'd.
 Besides, 'tis easier far, we bold aver,
 That one, than millions, should in vision err:
 Now should perverse philosophers conclude,
 That objects may ten thousand eyes delude,
 Then if my own should the same objects view,
 Can I be sure they're represented true?

That

That they are real, am I certain, more
Than all those thousands, who mistook before.

If certain Knowledge we can only find
By demonstration of the strictest kind,
This will the credit of all annals blast,
Nor have we means to know transactions past.
Must not all actions memorable die,
And in oblivion sunk for ever lie?

Absurd! for can't we full assurance draw
From histories, of things we never saw:
That *Cæsar*, *Pompey's* arms did overcome,
Usurp imperial pow'r, and govern *Rome*;
That thenceforth monarchs, and a purple train
Of scepter'd priests did in *Hesperia* reign;
That our first *William* of illustrious fame,
From *Gallia's* shores, to conquer *Albion* came;

That our eighth *Henry* did thy pow'r deny,

O *Rome*, and pontifical rage defie ;

And, great example, at one glorious stroke

Rescued this island from her servile yoke,

And the proud props of foreign empire broke ;

That our first *James* left *Scotia's* northern land,

Britannia's royal scepter to command ;

That these and other liege imperial Lords

Rul'd *Albion's* realm, as history records,

And that the various laws which bear the name

Of our successive monarchs, are the same

With those they made, and still obedience claim ;

Exclusive of all doubt, we are assur'd

These things are true, nor can there be procur'd

More certainty by any different ways

Of proof, whence reas'ning men conclusions raise

In other arts and sciences, ev'n those

Which evidence demonstrative propose.

And now this preparation finish'd, see,
 How we acquire unerring certainty,
 That the great signs and miracles were done,
 Recorded to evince, that Christ the Son
 Of God was Mediator Lord, and prove
 His high commission issued from above.
 None, than the Gospel histories, appear
 More from suspicion of imposture clear,
 Compos'd and written by the artless pen
 Of vulgar, plain, uneducated men,
 Poor and illiterate, and despis'd as fools
 By *Jewish* Rabbins and *Athenian* schools:
 And were not such disqualified to frame
 The vast, sublime, important Christian scheme,
 And then invent of wonders such a train
 Their new and forg'd religion to maintain,
 As could belief thro' num'rous kingdoms gain?

Would nations with their old religion part,
 Rooted by custom deeply in the heart,
 Their settled worship would great monarchs quit,
 To humour needy wand'ers, and submit
 At their persuasion to renounce their own,
 And serve a God, unheard of, and unknown,
 Had not amazing miracles been wrought,
 Which uncontested demonstration brought,
 That God confirm'd whate'er th' apostles taught;
 That he in heav'n had ratified and seal'd
 Their mission, and his will by them reveal'd?
 Could they, without great wonders done, pretend
 A new religious plan to recommend,
 And tell the world, that on a stranger's word
 Their ancient worship ought to be abhorr'd?
 That they should keep their country's rites no more,
 But their old gods disclaim, and Christ adore?

Or had they, seiz'd with wild distraction, tried
 To bring the *Pagans* to the Christian side,
 Without more motives ; who can e'er believe,
 The realms convinc'd their doctrines would receive ?
 'Tis true, th' impostor *Arab*, to promote
 His forg'd religious scheme no wonders wrought ;
 That he the pow'r of God himself proclaim'd,
 As *Jesus* was his Word and Wisdom nam'd ;
 This did the world by miracles persuade,
 That did with arms and violence invade,
 And proselytes by devastation made.

What then could make the *Pagan* kingdoms
 yield ?

Th' apostles led no armies in the field,
 Nor were they vers'd in statesmen's crafty rules,
 The arts of war, or learning of the schools ;

Yet destitute of eloquence and wit,
 Of pow'r and wealth, and all endowments, fit
 To plant a new religion, soon they won
 The people to believe; if this were done
 Without the help of miracles, then here
 See an effect without a cause appear.

His foes, the Scribes and Pharisees, did own
 The miracles, that were by *Jesus* done,
 And crowds immense ascertain'd by their sight,
 Were conscious of his wonder-working might.
 Nor did the *Pagan* writers, *Porphyr*
 And *Celsus*, fam'd philosophers, deny,
 That all those mighty works the Christians quote
 To prove his mission, were by *Jesus* wrought;
 And had they not appear'd to them unfeign'd,
 And with no marks of art collusive stain'd,

Could they from want of wit or spite neglect

To find th' imposture, and the fraud detect ?

Supported by the suffrages of all

In eldest times, this truth can never fall,

That miracles surpassing Nature's sphere

By *Jesus* wrought did evident appear,

And from all umbrage of deception clear.

This argument yet farther to pursue,

And prove the Saviour's signs and wonders true,

We reason thus ; that witness we believe,

Who cannot be deceiv'd, nor can deceive :

Th' apostles, who these miracles relate,

Did on their sacred Master daily wait ;

They heard his words, and saw his works, and

thence

They were ascertain'd by the evidence

Undoubtful of their own unerring sense.

His mighty works their Lord did oft repeat,
They standing by, nor could the senses cheat
These lookers on : for should we that concede,
We could no ground of certain knowledge plead;
All principles of science would be lost,
Euclid no more could demonstration boast.
If on our senses then we may depend,
And, that they can't mislead us, we contend,
Th' Evangelists could no deception find
From false ideas carry'd to their mind,
Who, as companions with their Lord convers'd,
And only what they heard, and saw rehears'd.

And from convincing proof, we may conclude,
They undeluded could not us delude.
These men are still in history allow'd
Offenceless, and with probity endow'd;

Were

Were ne'er accus'd of vile, immoral life,
Fraud or injustice, or seditious strife:
They on their neighbours drew no fatal harms,
Nor kill'd with open or clandestine arms;
Ravag'd no countries by licentious bands,
Nor temples rob'd with sacrilegious hands.
The only charge their foes against them brought
Was founded on the doctrines, which they taught;
And what revenge their malice bad them take,
Was for religion's, and for *Jesus* sake.

Nor were they only harmless, but they went
From place to place on doing good intent.
Where'er the wand'ers came, they left behind
Some blessings on the body or the mind.
Besides, to make their heav'nly mission clear
The seal of God, as mention'd, did appear

In signs and wonders, which th' apostles wrought
 Themselves, t' attest the doctrines, which they taught;
 Which did by clearest demonstration prove,
 That they were faithful envoys from above,
 Sent forth by high authority, to teach
 Celestial truth, and Christ the Saviour preach.

Besides, this pow'r, as old records assure,
 Did in the Church two centuries endure,
 When Christians urg'd the foes to come, and see
 The miracles they wrought by energy
 Divine, and by their own unerring sight
 Convinc'd receive the Gospel's heav'nly light.

Firm in confession of their Lord they stood,
 And seal'd at last their doctrine with their blood.
 Had they been able, yet they could not dare
 Spread schemes of new religion, and declare

At the same time, that those, who made a lyce
Should still bear penal flames, yet never die.

In vain 'tis urg'd, that some of fearless mind
For false religion have their lives resign'd :
See this objection thus with ease remov'd ;
For false religion none have martyrs prov'd,
Who did not think that false religion true,
And thus right reason's rules they did pursue :
For erring conscience must as well controll
Our acts, as when it moves and guides the soul
Aright inform'd ; for it is equal here,
If things are good, or only good appear :
But let th' objectors one example show,
Where men did death and torments undergo
For false religion, while they thought it so.

But

But now reflect, it cannot be denied,
 That Christ's apostles, if impostors, died
 For a religion they themselves had coin'd,
 And therefore knew, it must be false and feign'd.
 And now if men of manners innocent,
 Who life in pain and endless labour spent,
 And scorn'd and friendless wander'd up and down,
 Despising pow'r, revenues, and renown,
 Then death in shame and torture underwent
 To seal a lye, they did themselves invent,
 And with great ardor spread ; if this were so,
 It must our Nature's order overthrow :
 Men schemes may lay, and nothing thence intend,
 And act with zeal, yet act without an end ;
 And then, behold, against right reason's laws,
 Effects may be produc'd without a cause.

For tell us, hardy unbeliever, tell,
 What aims, what springs, what motives could impell
 Th' Evangelists, who had no worldly view,
 To do and suffer thus, were not their doctrine true?
 Nor, wonderful! did ever one repent
 Of this suppos'd imposture, or lament
 His crime, but harden'd, rather chose to die,
 Than by confession to renounce a lye;
 A lye, which by him forg'd, was to him known,
 If we the gospel scheme a fiction own.

By these conspiring lights it must appear
 To minds impartial evident and clear,
 That Christ's great works and wonders were un-
 feign'd
 Real and certain, which not only gain'd
 Th' assent of Christian converts, but of foes,
 Who did with ardent zeal that faith oppose.

Now

Now if the vanquish'd will renew the fight,
Harden'd and proof against convincing light,
To truth celestial falsehood they prefer,
Sway'd by a strong propensity to err;
To argument an anti-genius show,
And a perverse antipathy to know.



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THE
 ARGUMENT
 OF THE
 THIRD BOOK.



*AFTER Adam's fall, Man-
 kind grew more and more de-
 generate, 'till, near the time
 of our Saviour's coming, the
 World was overspread with
 detestable Immorality and pro-
 found Ignorance, not only the*

*common people, but Philosophers and the Schools
 of Learning were plung'd in the Dregs of Vice
 and Impiety. The Colleges of Greece became in-
 famous for their flagitious Practices and idola-
 trous*

trous Worship: many instances of their loose, vile, and wicked Deities, and of their leud and vicious Rites and Ceremonies, and the immoral and abominable Actions, by which they express'd their religious Devotion. A particular account of the corrupt Manners and wonderful Degeneracy of the Roman Empire about this time. As the Pagan World was now cover'd with a deluge of wickedness and the grossest Idolatry, so the Jews were become an abandon'd, vile, and most profligate Nation. Instances of this produc'd. Hence appears the necessity of the Revelation of the Mind and Will of God, to instruct and reclaim the dark and miserable World. The moral Precepts of Philosophers being lame, imperfect, and opposite to each other, and publish'd without the least pretence to any binding force or authority, or any Demonstration of their being enjoyn'd by a Legislator, whose Command can oblige all Mankind to obedience, are utterly insufficient for that purpose. As the World at this time stood in the greatest need of a clear Rule of Practice and Belief, so Jews and Gentiles, led by Tradition, grounded on Prophecy, generally expected, that about this time, some great and mighty Prince should arise in Judæah, and the Jews from distant Countries repair'd to Jerusalem, to be present at the coming of this promised Deliverer.



BOOK III.



W H E N *Adam* from his blifsful station
fell,

Won by the great seducer to rebel,

Behold, instead of intellectual light,

Expected knowledge, and unbounded sight,

See ignorance mankind does overspread,

Groveling in darkness, and in error led.

For now, since guilt the mounds had level laid,

And to the courts of death wide passage made,

K

Black

Black eruptions from the mouth of hell,
 And clouds that heav'n's descending rays repell,
 O'erwhelm the world, and on the nations dwell:
 Tho' not extinguish'd wholly, reason's light
 Did here and there on the dark face of night,
 In which involv'd all *Adam's* off-spring lay,
 Some broken beams, some glimm'ring threads
 display,
 The tarnish'd leavings of the ruin'd day.

Now hapless was the fate of human kind,
 Whose individuals all born dark of mind
 In labyrinth's perplex'd, did guideless stray,
 And in *Egyptian* fogs mistake their way.
 The world enjoy'd but sick and waning light,
 Too feeble to dispell incumbent night.
 Knowledge divine and laws, that govern life,
 Were lost in error, and the fruitless strife

Of empty Sages, whose litigious schools
 Had science drown'd, and darken'd moral rules.
 They long in searching truth had been engag'd,
 And philosophick wars with ardour wag'd,
 Thro' many ages ; 'till at length, behold,
 This secret by their leaders we are told,
 That all enquiries after truth are vain,
 That nothing can be certain, nothing plain.
 Thus ignorance avow'd advanc'd her head,
 And o'er the sceptick world her empire spread.
Pyrrhonians, and the new academy,
 To this surprizing doctrine did agree,
 To whom those schools of learning most adher'd,
 Who own'd Religion, and a God rever'd.
 These schools the great philosopher of *Rome*,
 Genius divine and vast, did overcome,
 Who held their wild positions, and disclaim'd
 The generous truths, for which his pen was fam'd.

Another rival and as potent sect,
 Who did a God, the cause of things reject,
 Own'd, *Epicurus*, thy fantastick dreams,
 And rear'd this beauteous world by impious
 schemes.

While ignorance such wide dominion gain'd,
 See, vice grew bold, and triumph'd unrestrain'd.
 Which still its conquests o'er mankind renew'd,
 Encroach'd on virtue, and her pow'r subdued.
 Now vicious instincts reason's claim disown,
 Renounce obedience, and usurp the throne ;
 While adverse passions in fierce war engage,
 And with success alternate spend their rage,
 Confusion, misrule, uproar unrestrain'd,
 Lawless dominion o'er the soul maintain'd.

Each

Each age in wicked life outvied the past,
 And still the most degenerate was the last,
 'Till the worst crimes gain'd uncontested sway,
 And plung'd in vice, licentious kingdoms lay.

Now God, who on the lands indignant frown'd,
 In impious worship and vile manners drown'd,
 Recall'd his angels, who at his command
 Did guard the realms, and hostile fiends withstand.
 Thus were the guilty nations open laid,
 While demons reinforc'd the world invade.
 Men's bodies now the raging fiends possess'd,
 And with unnumber'd tortures fore oppress'd,
 Who by the inmate's fury uncontroll'd
 Look'd wild, and trembled, while their bowels roll'd
 In strong convulsive labour, and confess'd
 By agitated limbs th' infernal guest.
 Now 'midst the fire, now 'midst the water cast,

And now half-choak'd, they seem'd to breath their
last ;

While some to dwell 'midst lonesome tombs were
led,

And forc'd to live, sad fate ! among the dead,
Or wander thro' abrupt unpractis'd roads,
And fly to dark and comfortless abodes.

That all demoniacks were not men oppress'd

By lunacy and spleen, as some suggest,

'Tis clear, since fiends did multitudes infest. }

See, in the sacred pages 'tis enroll'd

One humane body did a legion hold,

Who, when expell'd by *Jesus*, earnest pray'd,

They might a neighb'ring herd of swine invade. (a)

Besides the body, they the mind possess'd,

Involv'd in darkness, and with guilt oppress'd :

(a) Mat. viii. 32.

And now to fiends, th' abandon'd nations pay
 Worship divine, and at their altars pray.
 Swiftly, mean time, contagious crimes encreas'd,
 Virtue declin'd, and pure religion ceas'd.
 Flagitious manners more and more prevail'd,
 And due regard to right and justice fail'd,
 Till ignorance and vice united reign'd,
 And idol-worship pow'r unbounded gain'd.

Now God resolv'd to finish his design,
 And execute the scheme of love divine,
 Form'd and decreed, e'er swift-wing'd time began,
 To break the pow'r of sin, and rescue man
 From Satan's cruel bondage, and restore
 The peace and freedom he enjoy'd before.

(b) See, in the heights of heav'n the circling sun,
 By whose revolving orbs the seasons run,

(b) St. Luke ii.

So long had travel'd thro' his annual way,
 That he at length display'd th' auspicious day
 From eastern chambers, when the Saviour blest'd,
 By whom mankind enslav'd should be releas'd,
 Came down from heav'n, and gracious did appear,
 Confess'd in flesh, and tabernacled here;
 As well our sinful Nature to refine
 By heav'nly light, and energy divine,
 As graciously to expiate our guilt
 By his own blood determin'd to be spilt.
 Nor could his presence here be more desir'd,
 Nor his celestial blessings more requir'd,
 Than now they were; for now all virtue fail'd,
 And vice and error o'er the world prevail'd.

When guilt had so extinguish'd reason's light,
 And o'er the mind cast such a gloomy night,

That men depriv'd of intellectual day,
Had groping in thick darkness lost their way,
Sages and wits with great endowments blest'd,
As well as vulgar minds were now possess'd
With gross conceptions of the pow'r supreme,
And of religion form'd the following scheme.

With an immoral race of deities,
They fill'd their domes, and stor'd th' unhallow'd
skies.

Beneath their first, they did in order place
Of heav'n-born Gods a long imagin'd race;
As marshals of the skies, presumption strange!
They methodiz'd, and did in classes range
Those deities, who all as rightful guests,
They said, were summon'd to their solemn feasts;

L

Where

Where all were cheer'd with rich ætherial wine,
 Which fed their Joy and pleasantry divine,
 And made their fresh immortal faces shine.

This loose assembly, of celestial birth,
 Rally each other with ungodlike mirth,
 And while around full bowls of Nectar go,
 Reciprocal disgrace and scandal throw ;
 Till they advancing nearer to debauch,
 From mirth became licentious in reproach.
 Now, while the bowzy guests thus disagree,
 See mingled marks of strife and luxury ;
 Tables o'erturn'd by Gods in sharp dispute,
 And mantling nectar spilt the skies pollute,
 While strown ambrosial heaps the floor oppress,
 Celestial surfeit and divine excess.
 And thus the Pagans sentiments embraced,
 Which to the worst of men the gods debas'd.

And

And next to these of high immortal race,
They did their genii and their demons place,
Aerial kinds of ministerial gods,
Who had below the moon their blue abodes.
The upper clats, that could not trouble bear,
Bestow'd on these the empire of the air,
And bad them men create, and rule with care ;
That by their constant labours they might ease
Of this mean task supreme divinities.

Besides this rank to gods aerial giv'n,
They made the earth a nursery of heav'n,
Which part by fertile superstition, part
Improv'd by subtle sacerdotal art,
Brought harvests forth of these low deities,
That stock'd the land with priests, with gods the skies.

Mortals, whose merit did illustrious shine,
 Rose, when deceas'd, to dignity divine.
 See, worthies, who renown'd in arms repell'd
 Th' invading foe, or fatal monsters quell'd,
 Or from contagious deaths their country freed,
 First dress'd the vine, or sow'd for bread the seed,
 Were by the people for their virtue prais'd,
 And to the class of gods inferior rais'd.
 Each had his sacred altar, temple, shrine,
 And priests, their proper equipage divine.
Greece and *Hesperia*, each a fruitful place,
 That teem'd with deities of meaner race,
 Crowded the heav'ns with numberless supplies,
 Of demon-gods, and half-divinities ;
 And by the grossest superstitions led,
 Ador'd their species, and of heroes dead
 Made living gods, in their own country bred.

These with the tribes of sublunary kind,
 So sages taught, were in commission joyn'd
 To govern things on earth, and leave in rest
 And indolence the pow'rs of heav'n possess.
 These advocates divine did still attend
 The awful court on high, and recommend
 Their vot'ries to th' immortal class above,
 And to procure their grace and favour strove.
 They did, to make them pleasing, careful bear
 From earth to heav'n religious praise and pray'r,
 And for kind answers thither had recourse,
 Gain'd by the pow'rful intercession's force.
 These gods by office had the sole command
 Of the wide ocean, and the spreading land,
 Did o'er great towns and potentates preside,
 And ministers divine did human nature guide.

Some

Some steady held the helm, and steer'd the state,
 Some did on armies, camps and battles wait.
 Some wide extended monarchies o'erturn'd,
 And in the dust imperial purple spurn'd,
 Or rais'd th' obscure to thrones and seats sublime,
 And made th' oppress'd to heights of glory climb.
 On messages important others fly,
 Envoys and internuncios of the sky,
 And traverse swift the trackless steepy roads,
 To execute the orders of the gods.
 These pow'rs inferior, so the nations thought,
 From heav'n the various gifts and blessings brought,
 Which the high gods did bountiful bestow,
 To ease the wants of needy men below.
 This was the doctrine, that the world ensnar'd,
 And rites divine and sacrifice prepar'd
 For demon-gods, nor wonder should it be,
 That nations fell to gross idolatry,

And

And worship'd those, who, so they understood
 Taught by their priests, procur'd them so much good.

More base and shameful objects are not found,
 Nor less to be ador'd, than many crown'd
 With pious honours and respect divine,
 As if those gods were settled, with design
 To cast contempt on sacred things, and make
 Mankind all altars and all rites forsake,
 Who scandaliz'd at such vile Deities,
 Might rather scorn all gods, than worship these.

Egypt of sacred pow'rs a fruitful soil,
 Ador'd the serpent and the crocodile,
 The vast voracious tyrant of the *Nile*.

Onions and leeks did to like honours rise,
 Transplanted from the garden to the skies.

Men,

Men forest-beasts in fields ætherial plac'd,
 And beauteous stars with monsters interlac'd.
 Stupidity amazing ! impious scheme,
 Of heav'n unworthy, and of pow'rs supreme !
 Systems so wild and despicable shock
 Ev'n vulgar sense, and all right reason mock.

Many of those of high ætherial birth,
 As well as these the off-spring of the earth,
 Were deep with ignominious habits stain'd,
 O'er whom ungodly fordid passions reign'd ;
 Or were, as thought, with wicked worship pleas'd,
 And with devotion infamous appeas'd.
 See, they ador'd the loose adult'rer *Jove*,
 Who did thro' heav'n and earth abandon'd rove,
 And did in incest and in rapes, as well
 As in high rank, all other gods excell.

Venus

They sacrific'd their chastity, to please
Venus and *Cupid*, wanton Deities,
 Who here below, and 'midst celestial pow'rs,
 Panders divine, procur'd ill-fam'd amours.
 The stupid world, of thought and shame bereft,
 False *Mercury* ador'd, the god of theft,
 Patron of fraud, himself a shameless thief,
 A highway-god, and of the robbers chief.
 See *Bacchus*, thought the planter of the vine,
 With riot honour'd and excess of wine,
 And wicked ways of worship, while the crowd,
 At virtue's cost, religion's pow'r avow'd.
 No wonder in his steps his vot'ries trod,
 Drunken adorers of a drunkard god.
 Nor were their known *Floralia*, solemn feasts,
 Observ'd by modes more pure, or chaster guests,
 Nor with less odious ceremonies, where
 To be immoral was their pious care.

Good heav'n! that human minds should be debas'd
 To such a low condition, as to taste
 Notions so wild, and settle in their creed
 Gods, who in folly foolish men exceed;
 For loose flagitious deeds to be abhorr'd,
 And not by prostrate crowds to be ador'd.

And thus the world vile deities rever'd,
 And to absurd religious schemes adher'd,
 And firm believ'd, they should their gods incense,
 If impious they preserv'd their innocence.
 Now, while their hope of pleasing heav'n was built
 On wicked actions and enormous guilt,
 And while religion was their virtue's bane,
 And to be sober was to be prophane;
 Is it surprizing, that mankind should lie
 Plung'd in the dregs of immorality?

For since the gods above, who, they allow'd,
 With all divine perfections were endow'd,
 Deserted virtue, and for vice declar'd,
 By their example votaries ensnar'd
 To act the worst of crimes were soon prepar'd,
 They did to all the heights of guilt aspire,
 Hoping the greatest glory to acquire,
 In being like the gods, whom they ador'd
 As the best beings, and their aid implor'd.

Thus while the Pagan lands had fill'd the skies
 With envious, proud, abandon'd deities,
 Against it self religion turn'd her arms,
 And lent to odious vice the heav'nly charms:
 It did the cause of sin and death assert,
 And the foundations of her own subvert.
 Now vice, devotion fighting on its side,
 Did lawless spread its black contagious tide

O'er all the realms, and while no bounds restrain
Its rushing torrent, did in triumph reign.

Nor were the vulgar, who are soon misled,
Alone with guilt enormous overspread,
But vice, embolden'd by success, assail'd
Applauded schools, and o'er the wise prevail'd.
Besides the poets, who for godless ways
Were as ill fam'd, as for lascivious lays,
Philosophers and moralists renown'd
Were in the dregs of life flagitious found,
Witness the crowd by *Aristippus* led,
Or in the herd of *Epicurus* bred.

Yet more the world's degenerate state to shew,
Let us the customs of high *Rome* review,
Which great in arms immense dominion gain'd,
Subdued the lands, and o'er the kingdoms reign'd.

BOOK III. A DIVINE POEM. 133

This generous people were of life severe,
Blameless of manners, and of mind sincere,
Which with unnumber'd conquests crown'd their
swords,

And of the nations made them sovereign lords;

'Till near the time, when the blest'd Saviour came,

Their merit sunk, and with it sunk their fame.

Instead of just heroick love of praise,

Of ardent zeal their country's name to raise,

Justice and publick spirit, and instead

Of worthy scorn of riches, did succeed

Ambition, pride, and raging avarice,

Whence envy, hate, and rapine had their rise:

They did no more to sacred truth adhere,

Faithless, and only in their looks sincere.

Vices, whose hostile natures disagree,

Here triumph'd, lust of gold and luxury.

All of another's goods were eager grown,
While they in riot dissipate their own;
Who now had all their generous manners left,
Of honour, faith, and probity bereft.

Thy senators, O *Rome*! who once did aim
To stretch thy empire, and advance thy fame,
For virtue, wisdom, dignity rever'd,
August and awful to the world appear'd:
But now soft pleasure's captives they are found,
By vice exhausted, and in riot drown'd,
Lavish and loose, corrupt and indolent,
Supine and thoughtless, or if active, bent
On mischief, and on vile designs intent.
Their greedy hands with fordid bribes were stain'd,
While gold their voices mercenary gain'd.
For gold they sav'd oppressors, and for gold
Acquitted traytors, and their country sold.

The leeches suck'd the blood of ev'ry land,
 By arms subjected to their high command;
 They strip'd by fraud and cruel violence
 The pillag'd provinces of wealth immense,
 Then arm'd with gold, accusers they withstood,
 And by their rapine made their rapine good.
 All who to plunder, when in pow'r, intend,
 The present plund'ers with great zeal defend :
 Offenders grace by turns receive and shew,
 And old oppressors spar'd, protect the new.
 This must the pillars of all empires shock,
 While criminals unpunish'd Justice mock.

Discord instead of amity prevail'd,
 And civil rage the strength of *Rome* assail'd,
 While war Patricians with Patricians wag'd,
 And fierce *Plebeians* senators engag'd.
 The nation by the trembling world ador'd
 In her own bowels sheath'd her conqu'ring sword,

Which raging spreads the red'ning *Roman* plains
 With vital purple from the wounded veins
 Of *Roman* youth, while confluent streams of blood
 Dyed *Tyber's* banks, and swell'd his troubled flood.
 What devastation did thy proud design,
 Ambitious *Sylla*, cause? what, *Marius*, thine?
 On *Rome* what vengeance did fierce *Cæsar* pour?
 How far, how wide, did *Pompey's* sword devour?
 What desolation did *Octavius* make?
 How did thy arms the world, *Antonius*, shake?
 While you contended, who should empire gain,
 Conquer high *Rome*, and o'er the nations reign,
 How was thy glory now, O *Rome*, defac'd,
 Advanc'd by virtue, and by vice debas'd?
 Thy sick'ning beauty now had lost its charms,
 By foreign rais'd, and sunk by civil arms.

Numbers their reason's dignity disgrac'd,
 And the wild schemes of impious schools embrac'd

Believ'd no God did Nature's system cause,
 Nor rul'd the conscious world by moral laws:
 That superstitious fears devotion bred,
 And thoughts divine sprang from a troubled head;
 That men, dissolv'd by death, no longer were,
 But scatter'd Atomes roam'd in common air,
 Whose ruin'd frame no pow'r could e'er repair. }
 These life to come mock'd as an idle dream,
 And retribution as a groundless scheme,
 The work of fancy, labour'd to create
 Vain terrors in a dark imagin'd state;
 And hence, the genuine sacred fountain dried,
 Which their religion's streams alone supplied,
 All piety, all social manners, all
 Heroick virtue did neglected fall.

If *Rome* th' imperial seat, which far in taste,
 Sense, and politeness, all the realm surpass,

Involv'd in darkness and pollution lay,
 And victor of the world did vice obey,
 What must we think of *Scythia*, and the lands
 Where fam'd *Oraxis* rolls his spreading sands,
 Which *Indus* washes, where *Hydaspes* flows,
 And where the moon's high mountains with their
 Snows
 Feed sev'n-mouth'd *Nile*, and where thy shoulders
 rise,
Atlas, and seem to bear th' incumbent skies?
 These barb'rous nations, well we may presume,
 In vice and impious customs equal'd *Rome*.

And as her Natives of the sceptick kind,
 Deny'd all certain knowledge to the mind,
 And those, who *Epicurus* scheme embrac'd,
 All the foundations of religion raz'd,

A parallel in *Palestina* see:

The sons of *Sadok*, and the *Pharisee*,

Two rival sects, had now as much debas'd

Science divine, and laid all morals waste.

To free the mind from inward conscious strife,

And guilty fears, those sunk the coming life;

And thus destroy'd the pillars, that sustain

Religion's cause, and growing vice restrain.

The *Pharisees*, a hypocritick race,

Did revelation's principles embrace,

But from their glosses and traditions vain,

Which clouded, what they promis'd to explain,

They did such wild absurd conclusions draw,

As darken'd scripture, and destroy'd the law.

The orphan and poor widow they devour'd,

Express'd all marks of cruelty, and pour'd

Prolong'd petitions forth, with vile design,

To throw o'er heinous guilt a veil divine.

Oppression, pride, and avarice unknown,
 And black imposture to perfection grown,
 Ambition, envy, hatred, and disdain,
 Did o'er the cruel sect unrival'd reign.
 They paid obedience to minute commands,
 Oft cleans'd their pots, and wash'd as oft their hands:
 Of mint and cumin tyths did careful take,
 But laws important ineffectual make.
 And if these chiefs renown'd, to whom the crowd
 With reverential awe submissive bow'd,
 And by their precepts all their manners fram'd,
 For such egregious crimes were justly blam'd,
 Then must the vulgar, ready we believe,
 Into the practice of their leaders give.
 Nor did flagitious manners ever spread
 Their poison more complete from foot to head,
 Than thro' *Judeah's* prostituted land,
 Nor e'er acquir'd more absolute command.

For magistrates and people, high and low,
Did no distinction in their morals show.
The foul infectious leprosy of vice,
Which from detested doctrines took its rise,
By great examples and loose customs fed,
Its odious plague did thro' the kingdom spread,
And o'er their minds, yet more dominion gain'd,
Than that contagion, which their bodies stain'd.

The sacred office of the sov'reign priest
For bribes, which no promoters did resist,
Was now on worthless candidates confer'd;
These bought the oil, that flow'd down *Aaron's* beard:
Hence came his garment glorious to behold,
And ornaments magnificent by gold.
Murder and rapine had such footing gain'd,
That criminals grew daring, and sustain'd

By

By pow'r and numbers, would no more be try'd;
 But insolent the magistrate defy'd;
 Whence over-aw'd the Sanhedrim forsook
 Their courts, and refuge in a new one took.

When *Christ* was born, the manners of the *Jews*
 In a strong light their fam'd historian shews,
 In that account, which by his pen appears
 Of their vile deeds in a few following years.

When mighty *Rome* with spreading empire crown'd
 Her conqu'ring eagles mov'd, and compass'd round
 With arms and bulwarks *Salem's* gather'd pow'rs,
 And with her batt'ring engines shook her row'rs,
 At once within with barb'rous party-rage
 They civil war, without they foreign wage;
 And when the *Roman* from th' assault withdrew,
 They to intestine combat desp'rate flew.

Sion, that now with fire seditious burn'd,
 Against herself her fatal weapons turn'd;
 She did by demons agitated rave,
 And kill'd her youth, to whom she being gave;
 Brothers in arms did brothers fierce pursue,
 Fathers the sons, and sons the fathers slew.
 So furious they each other did invade,
 And in their streets such vast destruction made,
 That seas of blood down from the city ran,
 Whence tender tears, as said before, began
 To issue from the *Roman* leader's eyes,
 Whom such a woful prospect did surprize;
 And scarcely could his generous soul enjoy
 His conquest, while he saw his foes destroy
 Each other with inexorable rage,
 Not seen, nor told in any land or age.

Thus were the *Jews* and *Gentile* lands mislead
 By impious notions, and with vice o'erspread.

Philo-

Philosophers renown'd perhaps did own
 One high, eternal, unseen God alone,
 But they this great important truth conceal'd,
 And to the vulgar scarce its light reveal'd.
 Fam'd *Socrates* in *Athens* dar'd deny
 Their Superstitious, feign'd plurality
 Of gods, and did for this confession die:
 While other chiefs for wisdom most rever'd,
 Whate'er they thought, to idol-gods adher'd;
 To these in prostrate adoration pray'd,
 And publick worship at their altars paid;
 And no religious rites or modes refus'd
 In sacred temples by the people us'd.
 And this safe doctrine too they taught, that all
 Before those gods adoring low should fall,
 Whom in their country they establish'd find,
 And practice all religions there enjoyn'd.

Thus did consulted Oracles command
 All to observe the worship of their land,
 The laws, that fix'd religion, to obey
 And to their city's Gods devotion pay.

Now Sages virtue, not religion, sought,
 And priests religion, and not virtue taught.
 These out of pompous rituals, slaughter'd beasts,
 Piacular lustrations, sacred feasts,
 Dances and shews and sports religion fram'd,
 Mindless of morals, and of life unblam'd.
 Those did, with rules of virtue, Men assist,
 And left religious doctrines to the Priest:
 Yet they could draw by reason's utmost stretch,
 Of morals but a dull, imperfect scetch;
 For in their schools crimes most detested reign'd,
 And warranted by them dominion gain'd,

N

While

While eastern teachers did not incest blame,
Nor did the western censure *Sodom's* shame.

But grant these masters not with vice defil'd,
Had a just set of virtue's rules compil'd,
By what authority could they impose
Their precepts on the world? say whence arose
The binding force, that should their rules attend,
On which man's duty and reward depend?
If by his own authority the Sage
Men to obey his precepts would engage,
Then each renown'd philosopher can bind
With legislative pow'r all human kind.
Whate'er they say men should believe and do,
The world must practise, and receive as true;
And if repugnant laws from diff'rent schools
Come forth, they must obey those adverse rules.

BOOK III. A DIVINE POEM. 163

But if the laws, that moral masters give,
Do not their binding energy receive
From empire and authority their own,
And yet they have no other fountain shown,
How idle is their heap of rules, that lay
No obligation on us to obey?

Had these philosophers by reason's Light
Prov'd that their precepts equal were and right,
And thence infer'd that God, th' eternal cause
Of reason, must have made all reason's laws,
We should have seen authority divine
Thro' all th' authentick rules of Nature shine,
And clearly known how God's unwritten law
Oblig'd mankind, and did the Conscience awe.

A Pagan Scheme of morals to compound
Collect the rules in all great authors found,

Ranſack all *Egypt's* hieroglyphick ſtores,
 And thence repair to diſtant *India's* ſhores;
 The treaſures thence of moral learning fetch,
 What *Brachmans*, what *Gymnoſophiſts* can teach;
 Curious to each renown'd inſtructor run,
 Conſult *Confucius*, *China's* learned ſon;
 Repair to *Persia*, there the *Magians* know,
 And catch the ſtreams, that from thoſe fountains
 flow;
 Adorn the mind with *Grecia's* brighteſt flow'rs,
 Apply to all her ſam'd ſcholatiſtick pow'rs;
 Converſe with *Plato*, ſearch the *Stagyrite*,
 And borrow from *Pythagoras* his Light;
 Advance to *Rome*, frequent the *Tuſculum*,
 And back enrich'd with *Tully's* dictates come:
 From theſe materials gather'd up prepare
 A moral ſyſtem with judicious care.

But how jejune, how narrow will it be,
 How void of beauty, life, and energy,
 Compar'd with *Christ's*, who life immortal brought
 To light, and pure celestial precepts taught;
 E'er he appeared, by various error led
 Men had few laws, that plainly could be read:
 'Tis true that nature's rules had set them right,
 Had they possess'd a clear, sufficient light
 To find them out; but then it is as true,
 Their reason did in vain that task pursue;
 In vain with studious toil their master strove
 The thick o'erspreading darkness to remove,
 And introduce an intellectual day,
 For still the world involv'd in error lay.

No Pagan Sage, his precepts to commend,
 Did a commission from above pretend,

Whence vested with authority divine,
 He might th' observance of his rules enjoin;
 Nor have their authors ever yet compil'd
 A Code complete, where Nature's laws are fil'd,
 Which form'd with skill consummate did contain
 A regular, and close coherent chain
 Of moral rules, that by deductions clear
 From uncontested principles appear.
 'Tis evident the world yet never saw
 Such a digested, full, decisive law,
 A statute book of Nature, that could bind
 The conscience, and unerring lead the mind.
 Nor was there one acknowledg'd judge, to whom
 Contending foes might for decision come.
 Who e'er appear'd, as to a perfect rule,
 To any system, form'd by any school;

BOOK III. A DIVINE POEM. 167

Did *Zeno* judge, in dubious doctrines, sit?

Did wrangling *Athens* to the volumes writ

By *Plato's* pen, to *Tully's Rome* submit?

Grant a just moral scheme had been design'd

And publish'd to direct all human kind,

Could it have been convincing, clear and plain

To the mechanick and the rural swain?

Can they support a long discursive race,

Up to their fountain head deductions trace,

And see conclusions down in order brought

By reason's pow'r from principles remote?

Can they the force of demonstration know,

Discern how sequel does from sequel flow,

And how one truth does from another grow?

But these with faithful senses are endow'd,

And are to taste, and feel, and see allow'd,

By which a sign or wonder they discern,
 And thence the mission of a prophet learn;
 When that is done, they justly acquiesce
 In all things, which that prophet shall express.
 This is a ready, short, and certain way
 That to their minds does heavenly truth convey,
 Who have not clear and penetrating sense
 And judgment for abstruser evidence.
 The certainty the vulgar thus acquire,
 Surpasses that, to which the schools aspire:
 For let the most acute scholastick Sage
 In studious toil his working thoughts engage
 To search out precepts moral and divine
 By Nature's beams, which dim and waning shine,
 When he his numerous consequences strings,
 And by progressive reasoning to the springs
 And principles self-clear does by a train
 Of propagated maxims passage gain,

He'll still suspect, that in a chain so long
 Of nice deductions, something may be wrong.
 They who in raising systems spend their age,
 In hard abstracted notions deep engage,
 And roam thro' speculation's fields immense,
 Will often feel a painful diffidence
 Lest in the heights sublime, and arduous way,
 Their feet have sometimes slip't, and gone astray:
 Lest some false steps they did in arguing make,
 By inadvertence, prejudice, mistake,
 Or want of judgment and sufficient light
 To guide them thro' dark Mazes always right.

Should one a happy moral scheme compose,
 One, who the Christian revelation knows,
 He from the books inspir'd must borrow force
 To aid his reason, and direct his course,

Tho'

Tho' he perhaps to this would not attend,
Nor mind the help the sacred pages lend.

That here we reason strictly right, is plain,
Since all the fam'd philosophers in vain
This hard unequal labour have essay'd,
They have no scheme of moral precepts made;
But what is crude, imperfect, dry and lame,
And wants foundations to support its frame.

The *Pythagorean*, and the *Stoick* schools,
With *Plato's* all renown'd for moral rules,
Did a dark fate unchangeable defend,
Which their high Gods controll'd, and did depend
On a coherent, undissolving chain
Of causes, whence the necessary train
Of all events by force resistless flows;
This fate, as they assert, its being owes

BOOK III. A DIVINE POEM. 175

To the celestial orbs, that roll above,
And thoughtless all inferior bodies move.
But are not then the rules their books contain
To guide our life, impertinent and vain,
When orbs that roll above our deeds constrain?
This plainly is to mock all human kind,
Whom thus they fast in fatal fetters bind,
Then bid them active rise, and cheerful run
In virtues paths, and ways immoral shun.
And thus these schools their own foundation shake,
While war against themselves their leaders make;
They inconsistent principles employ,
And by their doctrines moral life destroy,
Which they pretend to guide, yet undermine
By their repugnant rules their own design.
For while these incoherent masters held,
That men by powerful causes were compell'd,

And

And so engaged that none could disobey
 This overruling force and secret sway,
 Tell, at what end philosophers could aim,
 That with such toil did moral systems frame,
 Unless these two Ideas can agree
 That is, that human actions may be free,
 Yet spring from uncontroll'd necessity ?

Nor did the precepts of the *Stagyrite*,
 Improve the erring world by clearer light,
 Who as he own'd no arbitrary cause
 Of things, so he believed no Gods gave laws
 To guide the life, whom he excus'd from care
 Of human kind and every low affair ;
 And did to make the world blind fate advances,
 A task that *Epicurus* gave to Chance.
 Hence tho' the Sage a book of morals fram'd,
 And at a work of great perfection aim'd,

BOOK III. A DIVINE POEM. 173

He has to no authority recourse
To give his lifeless dictates binding force;
But laws without a legislator, rules
Without a ruler, like the other schools,
He there lays down, we must, he says, comply
With his decrees, but never tells us why.

Now if their great philosophers are found
So ignorant, and in such error drown'd,
That they could no important succours lend,
Nor help the realms their practice to amend,
What could from *Epicurus* Garden spring?
What could thy doctrines, *Aristippus*, bring,
Or *Pyrrho's* maxims to improve mankind?
Could men by their loose precepts be refin'd?

And now no truth can stronger light display,
Than that the world, which thus in darkness lay
Did

Did highly want a teacher from above,
 Who might its clouds and gloomy night remove;
 Who vested with authority divine,
 Might on the lands make light celestial shine;
 The scheme of man's redemption might unfold
 Reveal new precepts, and inforce the old.

And as the nations now did highly need
 A rule of practice, and of faith a creed,
 So now approach'd the destin'd happy Year,
 When blest Messiah promis'd should appear,
 By Heav'n commission'd to reform mankind,
 Correct their manners, and improve their mind.
 Here *Jacob's* sons with grace peculiar crown'd,
 And all the *Gentile* monarchies around
 Led by traditions sprung from prophecies,
 Did now expect some mighty prince should rise

In *Palestine*, the regal throne ascend,
 And great in arms his empire far extend:
 The fam'd historian of the *Jews* apply'd,
 To sooth *Vespasian's* vanity and pride,
 To that great Man this prophecy divine,
 And to his reign determin'd Heav'n's design;
 For which in *Rome* that monarch gave command
 The flatterer's statue should erected stand;
 Perfidious *Hebrew*, that could thus presume
 His country's glory to confer on *Rome*!

Now too the *Jews* allur'd by spreading fame
 To *Salem's* gates from distant nations came,
 Where they dispers'd their colonies, to wait
 Messiah's coming in imperial state.
 The confluent tribes did here rejoycing meet,
 And with their deluge fill'd each crowded street,

*

Where

176 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK III.

Where mixt with strangers from each neighb'ring
Land

They did confirm'd in Expectation stand
To see in favour'd *Palestina's* skies
The promis'd light, and *Israel's* glory rise,
The mighty Prince, the blest Redeemer, Lord,
By whom they thought their pow'r would be restor'd.
That he triumphant would fall'n *Jacob* save,
And from the Yoke of *Rome* release her slave.
Would raise desponding *Salem's* drooping head,
On vanquish'd nations make her warrior's tread,
And far and wide her potent empire spread.
And tho' this promis'd Lord did still disown
Impetial greatness and an earthly throne,
Whence grossly they mistook, who had in view
A mighty prince that would the realms subdue,
And make proud *Rome*, and all the heathen lands
Submissive own *Judea's* high Commands,

Yet right they judg'd that now the time was near,
When blest Messiah should to men appear.

In vain some *Jews* an idle fiction vent
Of two Messiahs destin'd to be sent,
One, who should shame and mighty sorrow know,
One, who should great in arms and empire grow,
To that, say they, the sacred texts relate,
Which tell Messiah's low afflicted state:
Of this they all the prophecies explain,
Which mention blest Messiah's glorious reign,
Whose arms should o'er the world dominion
gain.

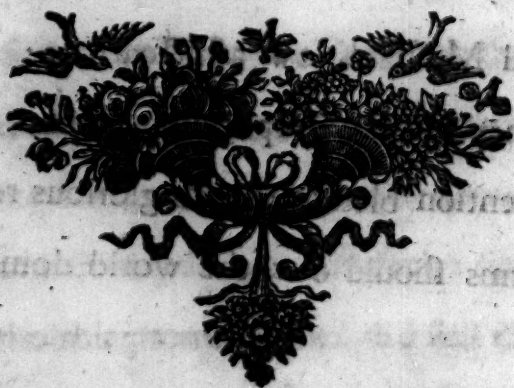
But such absurd and empty fables, bred
In a romantick vain Rabbinick head,
Fertile of frauds and legends, to sustain
Perverse opinions, justly we disdain.

O

They

178 *REDEMPTION*: Book III.

They, who to such imagin'd notions fly,
 That on no proof no evidence rely,
 Declare to all endow'd with vulgar sense,
 Their cause is desperate and without defence.



THE



THE
 ARGUMENT
 OF THE
 FOURTH BOOK.

The Introduction, in which abundance of Objects are enumerated, about whose existence the mind has no doubt or hesitation, tho' the causes why, and the manner how they exist, surpass our comprehension. The province of reason in many instances extends no farther than to examine the evidence alleg'd to prove a position true: If that be clear and conclusive our Assent is justly demanded, tho' we cannot conceive and explain, why, and how the thing is so. Hence it is no argument against the strict Divinity of the Son of God, that we cannot penetrate the intrinsick nature of the

O 2

divine

Divine Being, and declare the manner of Christ's essential union with God the Father: For all that finite reason can possibly do, when exercis'd about an infinite object is to search and weigh the proofs produc'd to shew that any assertion is true which concerns his incomprehensible Essence. The intrinsic nature of God is known only to himself; whatever therefore is discovered of it, must be discovered only by divine revelation. The divinity of Christ in the strictest sense revealed in the sacred scriptures. Several texts cited for this purpose. Clear and immediate deductions from express Texts prov'd to be as conclusive and canonical as those Texts themselves. The great argument for Christ's divinity drawn from his being stiled Creator or Maker of all things manag'd at large.



E E, all th' elated sects of Sages boast,

Their schools have arts and sciences ingross'd,

That they can Nature's wonders open lay
Her secret works, and winding walks display,
And to her dark recesses let in day ;

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 181

In vain ; the world's mysterious volumes mock
Scholastick search, nor can the wise unlock
By philosophick skill the hidden springs
Of Nature, to reveal the modes of things.

Ye Colleges of learning, that abound
With heads for wit refin'd and sense renown'd,
Produce the man, who can the props unfold,
That the vast orb in fluid sky uphold,
And tell the force, by which their race begun,
And why in one determin'd way they run.
Declare, by what impulsive steady force
They move, and never deviate from their course :
And let us know, by what mechanic art
The earth and heavens are kept so long apart :
What order, what distinction still preserves,
And from her way why Nature never swerves,

Excepting, when obedient to the Cause
Of all things, she suspends her settled laws.

What piercing wit can make the links appear,
By which material particles cohere ?
Or can the hidden principle explain,
From whence of things the various classes gain
Specifick essence, and a different name ;
Whence Beings individual nature claim,
And tho' still wasting, still remain the same.
How in its bed, and the dark womb of night
The growing gem is fill'd with heavenly light ;
How sapphire stones ethereal blue display,
What to the diamond gives its splendid ray,
And makes it rich with subterranean day.
Who can the forming of the meteors show ?
What tools give shape to hail ; what molds to
snow ?

Who

Who can the chymick engineers declare,
That in their floating furnaces prepare
The curious fire-works temper'd in the air,
Are now to shoot the falling star employ'd
Now kindle harmless flames, that dance along
the Void?

Who can the secret of the clouds explain,
The way of winds, and manner of the rain?
How hoary frost is wrought, and by what skill
Th' alembicks of the air moist dews distill.
Ye learned schools, shew us the Sage profound
That can mysterious thunder's birth expound,
The voice of God, that shakes the wilderness,
And fills mankind with terror and distress;
Can tell the match, that fires the sulphur train
Which in dark prisons rolling clouds contain,

Whence forked flames exploded swiftly fly,
And with their crooked light reveal the sky.

Is there a genius found, that can display
The principle of life, and shew the way,
How from the active goal it red'ning springs,
And runs thro' purple tubes its destin'd rings;
And tell us by what pow'rs th' unconscious soul
Of brutes the busy spirits can controul;
By what expression she can signify
Her will, and bid the swift wing'd envoys fly,
This way and that, and send their troops abroad
In vital duties thro' their nervous road,
To both unknown, and yet they constant find
The darksome passage by an impulse blind?

Who can the pencil, and the colouring art
Explain, that beauty exquisite impart

To painted flowers, where intercepted light,
By various windings vary'd, charms the sight;

Where is the wit for piercing thoughts renown'd,
That has the manner of conception found?

How in the mass the sleeping vital spark
Awaken'd glows, and kindles in the dark?

What is the plastick energy, that frees

And amplifies the nerves, and by degrees

Unfolds the tender complicated threads,

Augments their size, and life increasing spreads,

That swells the art'ry, excavates the vein,

And forms the bones, the structure to sustain?

Where is th' inlighten'd school, that can declare
If human deathless souls ingenite are,

Or else infus'd; if this, say when, and how

Did first those pow'rs the lifeless mass endow?

Besides

186 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

Besides, if this opinion we embrace,
All men would being from creation trace,
And miracles must still supply the race;
And how can being men from men receive,
Who neither matter, form, nor union give?

Besides, if this be so, since we are sure,
That souls from God's pure hands must come
forth pure,
Can bodies, which no moral blemish know,
To souls yet undefil'd infectious grow?
If both are spotless, let us know the way
How sin from parents you to sons convey?
How man is first of innocence bereav'd,
Born in pollution, and in sin conceiv'd?
But if on procreation minds rely,
And, as brute souls, increase and multiply,

Then

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 187

Then spirits may to spirits being owe,
And from successive generation flow.
But how will this to living things agree,
Unorganiz'd, and from all matter free,
Which of their substance cannot give a part,
Nor have, to make from nothing, pow'r and art:
Or if they had such pow'r, the sequel see,
This would creation, not production be?
But if it be asserted, that the soul
Does not infus'd and made inform the whole,
Then human souls, tho' from all matter freed,
Must souls engender and prolifick breed
Others, or else from matter they proceed.

Say by what ties an incorporeal Mind
Is with a body vitally combin'd?

How

How to the soul are outward objects brought?

How is perception by their impulse wrought?

What is idea, phantasme, what is thought?

What curious artist can dissect the brain,

And shew in memory's stores the sleeping train

Of hoarded images? and who can tell

How each awaken'd from its little cell

Starts forth, and how the soul's command it hears

And soon on fancy's theatre appears?

Where is the genius, that can comprehend

How immaterial souls themselves extend

To quicken molds of earth, and by what art

They animate and move each distant part!

This World immense, so 'tis believ'd by all,

Except the atheist, at th' Almighty's call

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 189

Sprung from the lonesome walks of empty space;
And rear'd from nothing shew'd its beauteous
face.

But now th' acute scholastick Sages name,
Who can th' idea of creation frame;
That can conceive, how hills, and seas and skies
From vacant night did into being rise.
How God can future things contingent see,
How unextended fill Immensity,
How he exists thro' all th' unbounded space,
All in the whole, and all in ev'ry place.
Nor does duration, which no limits bound,
The most exalted reason less confound,
What mind of this can a just image shew,
Or comprehend at one extensive view
Without succession everlasting age;
And time from this idea disengage?



Time

190 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

Time, whose incessant streams their passage make
Thro' vast eternity's unflowing lake,
And thro' this standing gulph unmingled glide,
Till there they disembody their ebbing tide,
When years and ages having run their race
Of th' unprogressive now disclose the face:
Yet we of things th' existence may defend,
Tho' their dark modes all reason's reach transcend.

Justly we ask, that men should understand
The evidence, that does assent demand;
But they are only bound to comprehend
Prevailing proof, while they can ne'er extend
Their lights so far, as fully to conceive
The object, which they cannot but believe.
Convinc'd by sense or reason we may own
Beings, whose modes or causes are unknown:

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 191

For evidence, as demonstration plain,
And proofs by light resistless may constrain
The mind to yield, and full assent allow;
Things are existent, tho' we know not how.
We therefore may believe, that pow'rs divine
And boundless, in the blest Redeemer shine,
And that th' almighty Father and the Son,
Distinct in person, are in substance one,
Tho' the sublimest wit would strive in vain
The mode of their blest union to explain,
Since the great mind does undiscovered dwell
In gulphs of glory unapproachable,
And since his being no set bounds restrain,
No understanding finite can explain
His nature, which had still remain'd conceal'd,
Had not himself the mystick truth reveal'd.
For his intrinick essence can be shown
Only by God, to whom 'tis only known.

Hence

Hence what the volumes of his sacred word
 By inspiration dictated record,
 Compell'd by reason, firmly we believe,
 Tho' we th' unequal object can't conceive.
 But tho' we can't his essence understand,
 Yet the severest reason will demand
 Assent, to what Heav'n's oracles aver;
 For following truth itself we cannot err.

Then let the champions who our creed disown
 And the Redeemer Lord, as God dethrone,
 At Scripture's high unerring bar be try'd,
 Let revelation's light the cause decide,
 Let them their usual faithless arts employ,
 Prevaricate and shuffle, and destroy
 Clear obvious sense, now cloud or maim the phrase
 Now change the text, and shift a thousand ways

They

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 193

They'll find their disingenuous turns are vain,
Nor will allusive frauds their cause sustain.
For since the books inspir'd in every part
Our Lord's supreme divinity assert,
Constrain'd by reason we that point embrace,
And, tho' we can't the cause and manner trace,
See, Evidence demonstrative will shew
That this important article is true.

That God exists, is clear to reason's eye,
But his intrinsic Essence to descry
We on its feeble light in vain rely.
Who can to heights interminable strive?
To depths, that know no limits, who can dive?
Who can th' Eternal Being comprehend?
To boundless presence who his thoughts extend?
What he from Heav'n declares must be believ'd,
And as unerring oracles receiv'd ;

P

Here

Here our assent, right reason says, is due
For what essential truth affirms, is true,
Now by the sects, that bear the Saviour's name,
And his bright train of promis'd blessings claim,
The Scripture's sacred volumes are admir'd,
And own'd the works of holy men inspir'd,
To teach celestial knowledge, and display
Th' Almighty's will, and spread forth Christian day.
As they fall'n Nature's waning light restore,
So doctrines they declare unknown before,
Which to the Saviour's Deity relate,
And his blest kingdom's mediatorial state.
Then let the mind from prepossession free
Search these authentick registers, and see
What the acknowledged oracles record
Of the blest Son, the great Redeemer Lord.

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 195

'Tis there that he is Lord of Lords exprest, (a)
He's Lord of hosts, and the great God confest. (b)
Sublime expression, and majestic names!
Which the most High to him peculiar claims!
Titles, that he has still unrivall'd born,
And which no creature ever did adorn:
The awfull name JEHOVAH all must own
God does appropriate to himself alone;
But see the books inspir'd that cannot err,
This name to God confin'd on Christ confer. (c)
Hence when our Savior *Christ* is call'd the Lord,
Jehovah in the *Hebrew* is the word,
Which does so oft occur in sacred writ,
That all should this convincing proof admit,
Who see the name to *Christ* our Lord is giv'n,
Peculiar to the God of Earth and Heav'n.

(a) Revel. xvii. 14. xix. 16, (b) Titus ii. 13. (c) Jer. xxiii. 6.

Mind what the prophet *Joel* does record, (d)
They'll on Jehovah call, which is the word
 Original, which here is render'd Lord.
 This text th' Apostle does to *Christ* apply, (e)
 And on this truth we firmly may rely,
 That he inspir'd knew well, that *Christ* might claim
 Justly that incommunicable name
 Of God, and therefore with him is the same.
 This by the context is so clear, that he
 That runs may read, and evidently see,
 That *Christ's* the subject of the whole discourse
 In this known place; tis then presumptuous force
 And perfect outrage, to distort and strain,
 To any other meaning texts so plain.
 Besides remark, that when 'tis said, that they
 Shall call upon his name, that is, shall pray

(d) Joel ii. 32.

(e) Rom. x. 13.

For his salvation, and his help implore,
Which in the Scripture sense is to adore,
This invocation of religious sort
Must plainly *Christ's* divinity import.

He over all is God for ever blest, (*f*)
Words which have great *Jehovah* still confest.
The *Arian* chiefs are greatly hete perplexed,
How to evade this clear decisive text.
But resolute to make it speak their sense,
With candor, honor, justice they dispence,
And give without a cause another word
And order foreign to divine record;
Then hardy cry, it should be thus exprest,
Is over all; be God for ever blest.
And this is all they modestly desire,
That they as *Anti-arian* texts require,

Rom. ix. v.

May here insert a word, a comma there,
 To make them, what they never meant declare.
 Of criticism how great is this abuse?
 Give us of words this arbitrary use,
 We'll any thing from any thing produce,
 And by an over-ruling bold effort
 From any text, what sense we please, extort.
 How then are *Arian* Masters here distressed,
 That to defend their cause are so much prest,
 That they must change the words to *God be blest*
 Must not the scheme of *Arian* Disputants
 Be desp'rate judg'd, that such a refuge wants.
 To alter thus the text to serve a cause,
 Will indignation move, and not applause.

Besides immediate inferences flow
 From various pregnant texts, that plainly show

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 199

The Son of God by nature is divine,
Than which no truth can more conspicuous shine.
These first conclusions, which we clearly draw
From sacred Scripture by right reason's law,
No less than Scripture are canonical,
Nor do they short of demonstration fall.
The first deductions, that in arguing grow
From geometrick principles, we know,
Are scientifick, while they leave behind
No doubt, no fluctuation in the mind:
Nor can we greater certainty derive
From any proof, then such deductions give.

If first deductions, drawn from Scripture right,
Can't in the mind produce unerring light,
Then can the mind no certainty procure
Of any truths divine, nor can be sure

That there are sacred books, that they contain
 The texts thence cited, nor their sense explain;
 For these great points, they will be forc'd to grant,
 To give them credit, will deductions want,
 Since all religious doctrines ev'n inspir'd,
 Are by the force of inference acquir'd.
 That there are books by dictates from above
 Compil'd and pen'd, we must by reason prove;
 And that the texts are there oft cited thence,
 We gather from the evidence of sense,
 And argue thus; Our senses cannot err,
 Hence we th' existence of these texts infer.
 But since that maxim is fallacious found,
 If not by various limitations bound,
 And since the *Roman* Colleges believe,
 The senses are deceiv'd, and oft deceive,
 We must to farther demonstration fly,
 And that the sense is fallible deny,

Which

Which with restriction must be understood,
 The object proper, and the organ good.
 Then of our sense's truth we lay the stress
 On God's great justice, love and faithfulness,
 Which will not let him in delusion leave
 Mankind, and give them senses, that deceive,
 While 'tis our duty, where our senses guide
 To follow, and to act, as they decide.

Besides 'tis certain, that by birth the blind,
 That any texts exist, no way can find,
 But by deductions to convince the mind.
 They principles and clear conclusions need ;
 And to embrace that truth, must thus proceed :
 " That all without a cause should us delude
 " For the delusion's sake we must conclude
 " Not possible, and therefore we agree,
 " Those texts are extant, which we do not see.

That

That God exists, we by deductions draw,
 And that he has reveal'd his will and law
 In sacred books, which down thro ages brought }
 Preserve the doctrines, which the Saviour taught, }
 And are the same the holy penmen wrote. }
 If then the points we most important own
 By argument and inference are known ;
 Should men for want of certainty complain
 In consequences drawn from Scriptures plain ?
 To what the God of truth pronounces true
 Tis impious not to think assent is due,
 Tho' things sublime reveal'd surpass our reach,
 Yet they are certain, so does reason teach,
 And here does strictly unbelief forbid,
 Clear is th' existence, tho' the mode be hid.
 Then since each Christian is by duty bound
 To search the sacred volumes, where are found

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 203

All points reveal'd from Heav'n, on which depend
Celestial bliss, and joys that never end,
'Tis clear the holy pages must contain
These points, conceiv'd in easy terms and plain,
Else will the vulgar reader read in vain.
Alike th'unletter'd, and the Sage may know,
That things exist, tho not the manner how.

But while each *Anti-trinitarian* sect
The Scripture's clear and obvious sense reject,
Impatient of their light, they bold invent
Novel construction, and plain words torment
With critick engines, and with party rage
Force adverse texts for *Arians* to engage,
By this abuse of sacred writ they spread
False learning's fog o'er truth's celestial head,
They make all Scripture intricate appear,
And cloud with glosses, what before was clear.

If

If these are authoriz'd to fix their sense
 On Scripture, they have form'd a fair pretence
 To Heav'n, who take it thus by violence.
 Wits, scholars, criticks, then will only go
 To that blest place; men of conception low
 And rude the learned way can never know.
 To be a Christian one must long be bred
 In letter'd schools, and fill his thoughtful head
 With various tongues and sciences, and all
 The subtile arts, for which plain Scriptures call,
 That they the sense of *Arians* may confess,
 Who texts by force into their service press.
 But then what crowds of vulgar men are lost
 That no scholastick acquisitions boast?
 They, hapless fate! tho' not to vice enslav'd,
 For want of critick learning can't be sav'd.

The sect, that follow *Arius* as their head,
And those in thy proud schools, *Socinus*, bred
Their arbitrary sense on texts in vain
Impose, presumptuous error to sustain;
In vain to great and specious nonsense fly
And on false criticks labour'd shifts rely;
Perversely proud these men expound away
Scripture convincing as meridian day;
Then against force and violence exclaim,
And say, free-thinking is their generous aim;
But while as masters they the chair ascend,
And with an air dogmatical pretend
Texts to interpret, they impose their creed,
And not to argue, but to judge proceed.
Impatient of their easy genuine sense,
The tyrants with unnat'ral violence.

206 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

Rack and torment the Scriptures, to extort
Confessions, which their errors may support.

No more the foe at distance we arraign,
But close the fight, and thus the charge maintain.
On his almighty pow'r, a stable ground,
The Son of God's divinity we found,
And from the books inspir'd, which cannot err,
We clearly his Omnipotence infer.

The Heav'n's, say they (g), were by his hands dis-
play'd,
And the foundations of the earth were laid,
That all things that are made, by him were made.
From the black gulphs of unencompass'd space,
Where desolation shews his wasteful face
Where unsubstantial night and silence dwelt
And never yet creative vigor felt,

(g) Heb. i. 10. John i. 3.

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 207

This world immense did at his high command
Step ready forth, and up in being stand.
He the mixt parts distinguish'd, shap'd and rang'd,
To beauteous order he confusion chang'd;
From strife and uproar crude creation freed.
Blended and form'd the elemental seed,
Till finish'd nature lovely did appear
In her full bloom, and charms consummate wear.

If therefore revelation we receive,
We must our Lord's Almighty pow'r believe,
And thence his glorious deity confess,
And own him Lord and God supreme, unless
Capricious Sophists, who plain words pervert,
And a surprizing labour'd sense assert,
In points of vast importance must decide,
Instruct with fancies, and convince with pride.

But

But let us hear what *Arian* wits reply :

To shameful shifts they are compell'd to fly,

And say, that by such texts is only meant,

That he, the Son, was but an instrument,

Which in creation God most high employ'd,

When worlds unfinish'd fill'd the spacious Void.

But this is to affirm, and not to prove ;

Does it not justly indignation move ;

To hear the men, who master-talents boast,

As they all wit and judgment had engross'd,

On sacred writ a foreign sense impose,

And then presume to triumph o'er their foes ?

Yet can no single argument suggest,

No glimpse of reason, why they wrack and wrest

The sacred oracles, but this, that they

Which on the mind convincing light display,

Must for convenience be explain'd away ;

But

Else

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 209

Else must their chiefs disarm'd submissive yield,
And to the conqueror leave th' inglorious field.
Spread with false learning, metaphysick dreams,
Waste expositions, incoherent schemes,
And ruin'd sophistry, dispers'd about,
Scholastick spoils, and shameful *Arian* rout.
But how absurd, impertinent and gross
Is their precarious arbitrary gloss?
Say, do the Scriptures ever represent,
The Son of God as a meer instrument
In making heav'n and earth? their books peruse,
And find one text, that approbation shews
Of the forc'd meaning, which your authors use.
This then is not to argue, but suppose,
Not to confute, but mock superior foes.
Sure they, who boldly such additions make
To sacred texts, or thence a portion take,

Q

The

210 *REDEMPTION*: Book IV.

The solemn curse denounc'd on those defie,
Who lessen Scripture, or who more supplie.

Of critick art let these pretended lords,
Who still demand propriety of words,
Exhaust their learning, all their knowledge drain,
And their creating instrument explain.
Mechanical and unintelligent
Are proper notions to an instrument,
Which tho' an agent, yet to all it's known,
Acts by a foreign impulse, not its own.
If you should one of mind and choice possess'd,
Call Vice-Creator, this is sense confess'd,
But none a phrase absurder can invent
Than a free-will'd and reas'ning instrument.
Creation is by all an act allow'd
Of will divine; now one the least endow'd

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 211

With reason, letters, and scholastick skill
Will grant us, that an instrumental will
Affronts ev'n common sense, and overthrows
The use of words, whence light instructive flows.
What authors can these learned criticks show,
That use this word as they presume to do?
Tis true, in vulgar speech 'tis often said,
That God such monarchs and such heroes made
His glorious instruments of doing good;
But 'tis as true, this must be understood
Not in a plain, but metaphorick sense,
A figure, which in diction did commence
From tools and engines of mechanick use,
By which the artist does his work produce.
An instrument's a thing that workmen need,
Nor can their work without its help proceed.

212 *REDEMPTION*: Book IV.

Without the chisel can the sculptor hew
The marble stone? what can the painter do
Without his pencil? what are fishermen
Without their nets, and scribes without their pen?
And thus their tools should you from others take,
What works, what pieces could the artist make?
And sure our stiff antagonists will grant,
Th' Almighty pow'r no instrument did want,
No creature's force, no pow'rful engine's aid,
When he the heavens and earth, and all things
made.

When God, collected in creating might,
Went forth, he bid the worlds arise from night,
And from the void call'd forth primæval light:
By his sole nod the orbs in Æther roll'd,
And the vast deep did confluent waters hold.

Th' expanded air its spacious bosom spread,
The vales sunk down, and mountains rear'd their
head.

And that th' Almighty you will ready grant
In this great work did no assistance want *(b)*,
His Word with beings did the vacant fill:
And could an instrument assist creating will?
That appellation then to *Christ* applied
Is most absurd; so reason will decide.

That *Christ* was not an instrumental cause,
In making all things, by right reason's laws,
Th' enquirer thus most clear conviction draws.
All things, it is reveal'd, for *Christ* were made,
Which never of an instrument was said;
That cannot be the final cause nor end,
Which in his Work the agent does intend.

(b) If. xl. 13. xxvi. 28.

214 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

Painters and sculptors do not pieces make

Or for the pencil's or the chizel's sake.

Do master-hands in architecture skill'd

The temple raise, or the proud palace build,

Or artists frame a clock-work, to diffuse

The glory of the instruments they use?

Do they to them direct their final aim,

Or to their own emolument or fame?

If *Christ* is then the end of all things, he

An instrument creative cannot be.

But now, if our opponents think it fit

The notion of an instrument to quit,

Apply'd to *Christ*, and will in this dispute,

A conscious Maker subaltern depute,

Who to obey th' Almighty's high command

Did form the earth, and Heav'n's wide roof expand

As Vice-creator; with what force we ask
 Did he endow him for the mighty task?
 Declare what pow'r God did communicate
 To make a creature able to create?
 Say, was it circumscrib'd or unconfin'd?
 If circumscrib'd and finite is assign'd,
 That will be insufficient to sustain
 The labour of creation; for in vain
 All finite pow'r combin'd would be employ'd
 To raise up matter from the empty void,
 To fill with beings unsubstantial space,
 And build vast worlds on desolation's face;
 For to create from nothing must a hand
 Endow'd with strength unlimited demand;
 When in creation God exerts his might,
 The opposition must be infinite;

216 REDEMPTION: BOOK IV.

From the term nothing ⁽ⁱ⁾, where such acts com-
mence,

To the term being, where they end, immense

And boundless distance is allow'd to be,

Which must employ creating energy:

Then since no measure can this distance mete,

Immensely is the difficulty great

To be subdu'd, and therefore must demand

A boundless pow'r, that nothing can withstand.

That pow'r creative must be infinite,

See we demonstrate thus with clearer light;

To Pow'r, whose objects are unbounded, we

Most justly may ascribe infinity;

For that, which can create, can all things do,

For what can pow'r to this superior shew?

(i) Gen. i.

And if it can do all things, you'll confess
The objects of that pow'r are numberless,
And therefore infinite; let *Arians* try
Their reason's strength, and make a fair reply.

To make a being out of nothing grow
Is the chief act of pow'r, that God can show,
And if that action will not prove it, whence
Can we demonstrate God's Omnipotence?
Not all the signs and works prodigious done,
And miracles perform'd, since time begun,
Declare, were all united, greater might,
Than to call beings forth from empty night.
If in creation then th' enquiring mind
Can only finite pow'r exerted find,
Which never can infer Almightyness,
No works that high perfection can express:

Then

218 *REDEMPTION*: Book IV.

Then this Divine Essential Attribute
Can ne'er be prov'd, nor set above dispute:
God, as to his Omnipotence, is left
Without a witness, since we are bereft
Of proper means, by which it may be known;
Since Gods of vigor limited are none.

To prove a God, th' inspir'd Apostle brought
The works and wonders by creation wrought (k);
And God himself, who gave to nature birth,
Stretch'd forth the heavens, and hung in air the
earth;

This argument alleges to assert
His being, and idolatry subvert:
And inconclusive had such reas'ning been,
If all the vigour in creation seen

(k) Rom. i. 20.

Were finite, whence no more can be allow'd,
 Than that the great Creator was endow'd
 With strong extensive energy and might,
 Yet circumscrib'd and short of infinite:
 And if th' alleg'd creation prov'd no more,
 Men could not God Omnipotent adore,
 Nor be compell'd to own th' Eternal Mind
 Was in his operations unconfin'd;
 And if his Pow'r Almighty be dismiss'd,
 Can the Idea of a God subsist?
 Thus if creation shews but finite pow'r,
 And all his other works express no more,
 Impossible it is by this wild scheme
 To prove th' existence of a God supreme;
 Then might the world refuse a God to own,
 For he, who wants Omnipotence, is none.

Besides,

Besides, this subject clearer yet to state,
 The vast creation to annihilate,
 Demands as great a pow'r as to create.
 The agent here from being must proceed
 To nothing, which will equal vigor need,
 As when creating he from nothing went
 To being, points, which are, as all consent,
 At distance of a measureless extent,

We ask the *Arian* now, if God most high
 Were pleas'd and thought it fit to nullify
 And out of being blot all Nature's frame,
 And bring it back to nothing, whence it came,
 Whether our Lord he might not delegate
 To sink the world, as well as to create?
 If so, which they'll be forc'd to grant, we ask,
 If God for this annihilating task

Would

BOOK IV. A DIVINE POEM. 221

Would his deputed God supply with might
Confin'd and finite, or with infinite?
Not infinite, for that, as often said,
Can't to a finite creature be convey'd;
For finite beings unreceptive are
Of infinite, and should we here declare
That bounded things may boundless pow'r employ,
Each other those ideas would destroy.
But if they say, God would to *Christ* assign
For this great work a finite pow'r divine,
Then *Christ* by finite delegated might
May sink the World in empty void and night,
And be enabled to annihilate
Himself, as well as what he did create,
As under agent; this is plain, if we
To inconsistent *Arian* schemes agree.

But

But if our *Arian* disputants should say,
 God did to *Christ* unbounded pow'r convey
 T' enable him creation to display ;
 The Vice-creator must be then allow'd
 To be with pow'r uncircumscrib'd endow'd,
 And then a finite creature would contain
 Infinity, and would itself sustain.

At any time were *Christ* Almighty, he
 Must then for ever independent be ;
 Since he, who wanted no assistant once,
 For ever all reliance will renounce,
 For what can self-supporting pow'r o'erthrow ?
 Then independent once, and always so.

Another disputation we commence ;
 If God on *Christ* confer'd Omnipotence,

To make him able to create, we ask,
 That we th' ambiguous *Arian* may unmask,
 If God his own Omnipotence convey'd,
 And thus his creature *Christ* Almighty made,
 Or else another sep'rate from his own?
 If they the first assert, 'tis plainly shown,
 And may with clearest reason be aver'd,
 That his Almighty pow'r to *Christ* transfer'd,
 This Attribute Essential being gone,
 God was no more, but *Christ* was God alone;
 For God thus empty'd of himself, 'tis plain,
 No longer could his Deity retain.
 It boldly must affront ev'n vulgar sense,
 To own a God without Omnipotence:
 And could he part with that high Attribute,
 And give it to another, who'll dispute
 The consequence, that then he can't enjoy
 That pow'r himself, but would himself destroy.

To

But

But if the *Arian* says in his defence,
 That 'twas another vast Omnipotence
 And not his own, that God on *Christ* confer'd,
 Then two Almighty's justly are infer'd :
 That is, two Gods supreme must be allow'd
 With sep'rate true Omnipotence endow'd :
 Besides, if by another boundless might
 Than God's, our Lord made creatures, we have
 a right
 To ask you, what it was, and whence it came,
 And why it does that lofty title claim?
 With thoughts sedate these sentiments revolve,
 And as acute divines our questions solve.

These arguments attentively review'd,
 Each judge impartial ready will conclude,

More is demanded than imparted might,
 Feeble and low compar'd with infinite,
 To rear the world from vacancy and night.

To make primæval light display its wings,
 And cloath with Being unexistent things;
 To bid Arch-angels out of nothing rise;
 And with bright orbs immense adorn the skies:
 And since that boundless virtue *Christ* express'd,
 As in his vast creation is confess'd,

He does, as God supreme, our worship claim,
 And tho distinct in person and in name
 With the most high in Nature is the same.

But if they dare assert in this debate,
 That God did boundless might communicate,
 To make a creature able to create,
 They must confin'd capacity believe
 Can unconfin'd Almighty Pow'r receive,

R

That

226 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

That is, that finite beings can contain
 Divine perfection, which no bounds restrain,
 In which position contradiction clear,
 And as full day must evident appear:
 Therefore to this right reason will assent,
 God cannot creatures make Omnipotent.
 If vigor and almighty energy
 To creatures may communicated be,
 Why ~~not~~ not omniscience and immensity?
 And then made beings essence may partake
 Divine, and God may Gods his equals make,
 Who must these unconfin'd perfections own,
 Which, all assent, belong to God alone.

Besides in sacred Scripture we are told ⁽¹⁾,
 That *Christ* does all things by his pow'r uphold

(1) Heb. i. 3.

Then it must shine as light meridian clear,
 That boundless vigor must in *Christ* inhere :
 For to sustain all Nature must demand
 An Uncreated and Almighty Hand,
 That still must make an infinite effort
 Of pow'r, the vast creation to support,
 Which no less strength requires, than was employ'd
 At first to rear it from the empty void :
 Since *Christ* is then of boundless pow'r possess'd,
 He must be God supreme, for ever bless'd,
 For we have prov'd by demonstration plain
 No finite thing can pow'r immense contain,
 Fix'd here we stand, and all the force defy
 Of *Arian* wit and empty sophistry.

Now let us hear, what on the *Arian* side
 By searchers after truth may be replied :

R 2

God

God to th' Apostles they allege convey'd
 Omnipotence Divine, which they display'd
 In mighty wonders, miracles and signs
 Recorded in the Scripture's sacred lines;
 And, then they argue, hence we must believe,
 That creatures can Almighty Pow'r receive
 Transmitted to them from the God most high;
 To this we ready answer, and deny
 That any of th' Apostles works of might
 Prov'd they exerted vigor infinite.
 'Tis true, that in their works appear'd a force,
 That far surpasses Nature's usual course:
 But let th' objectors any fact assign,
 That argues boundless energy divine.

That the Apostles rais'd the dead is true,
 But how does that a Pow'r Almighty shew?

To warm cold veins, and such a vigor give,
 As makes again a lifeless body live,
 Is to the soul and body to restore
 The vital union they enjoy'd before:
 But ev'ry separation of the soul
 Does not the man among the dead enroll;
 Since *Paul* to heav'n caught up was in a doubt,
 If he was in the body then or out;
 Which proves, that souls, when from their bodies fled,
 Not always leave them number'd with the dead:
 For tho' their senses then are unemploy'd,
 Life only is suspended not destroy'd.
 Hence that disunion only death will show,
 When souls reluctant from their bodies go,
 Which are of no capacity possess'd
 Or fitness to receive th'informing guest
 Again, and live; nor can it be denied
 That some are more, some less disqualified.

230 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

Now bodies, which their souls have newly left,
 Are least of fitness to revive bereft,
 Nor such a great repugnance shew, as those
 Whose putrifying frame their graves enclose!
 And those, which have to fish and beasts been meat
 Or Canibals, who their own species eat,
 Or which are born, as winds and storms convey,
 From pole to pole, and in loose atoms stray,
 An indisposition yet far greater show
 To be reviv'd, and their first state to know.
 If then in bodies to be rais'd we see
 An opposition different in degree,
 The highest must demand a greater pow'r,
 It's plain, to overcome it than the lower:
 Th' inferior pow'r then can't be infinite,
 For 'tis exceeded by superior might:
 Since this is certain, then the pow'r, behold,
 That raises men new dead, and scarcely cold,

Is not of such superior kind, as when
 The cleaving graves shall yield up moulder'd men,
 And when the lakes and seas their dead resign
 Commanded by Omnipotence Divine;
 And those, whose atoms range the atmosphere;
 Or to the hills and rocks, as parts, adhere,
 Shall re-assemble at th' Almighty's call,
 Take their old form, and into order fall,
 Fit for returning souls, who at the sight
 To join their old companions wing their flight.
 And now, to draw this reas'ning close, you'll own,
 The Prophets and th' Apostles rais'd alone
 Those bodies, whence the soul was newly gone-
 They never from the grave call'd forth the dead,
 Who had the worm with putrefaction fed,
 Nor did they ever ruin'd forms repair
 Of bodies roaming thro' the sea or air:

232 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK IV.

The objects of their pow'r then, if compar'd
With other works more difficult and hard,
Must be inferior, then not infinite,
Which truth is clear by demonstration's light.

See, when *Elijah* rais'd the widow's son (l)
Life but few moments from the child was gone,
And when the prophet great *Elisha* (m) wrought
A work of mighty pow'r, and gracious brought
The *Shunamite's* departed son to life,
He had but newly felt the dying strife.
So when th' Apostle *Dorcas* did restore (n),
The woman was alive not long before:
And *Eutychus*, when rescu'd from the dead (o),
Had life within him, as th' Apostle said,
Yet of restoring life no instances
We in the sacred volumes find, but these.

(l) 1 Kings 17.

(m) 2 Kings iv.

(n) Acts ix. 36, &c.

(o) xx. 9, &c.

Bodies yet warm, or from corruption free
Rais'd from the dead shew pow'r of less degree,
Than that which ruin'd members can repair,
Sunk in the Sea, or scatter'd thro' the air;
And to the parts joyn'd in their ancient frame
Unite the soul, and make the man the same;
The first of these, as reason will agree,
By some superior Angel's ministry
May be perform'd, and they, all Christians know,
Are God's deputed agents here below :
At least the wisest Sage can never shew,
That this is what an Angel cannot do;
But to the last new being to restore
Demands omniscience and unbounded pow'r.
Yet is an action done by finite force,
That breaks thro Nature's customary course,
Or to amaz'd spectators does appear
A thing surpassing Nature's active sphere,

Strictly

Strictly a wonder, miracle or sign,
 Which proves that revelation is divine,
 Which to confirm, that mighty work is wrought,
 And for that end must be sufficient thought.

But now suppose the wonder-working might,
 That did th' Apostles aid, was infinite,
 Yet they declar'd, the pow'r that they had shewn
 In doing miracles, was not their own.
 Still were the wonders, so they did proclaim,
 Done by the pow'r of *Christ*, and in his name (p),
 And if that pow'r was infinite, 'tis clear
 In the Redeemer Lord it did inhere,
 Which he exerted when th' Apostles mind
 To work some wonder was by him inclin'd;
 And if with boundless might he was endow'd,
 It must by reason's dictates be allow'd

(p) Acts iii. 12 & 16.

That

That this divine perfection proves the Son
Was God most high, and with the Father one.

Should wranglers here allege, that *Christ* the
Lord

When he to life the slumb'ring dead restor'd,
And wrought his other wonders with a word;
Could by those wonders make no just pretence
To an inherent vast omnipotence:

But that like *Moses*, delegate of heav'n
He gave a sign, and when that sign was giv'n,
God did exert his vigor infinite,
And wrought the wonder in the people's sight.
Scriptures express, we answer, make it plain,
That this suggestion groundless is and vain,
Th' Evangelist affirms (q), that Virtue went
Out from our Lord, when he benevolent

(q) Marc. v. 30

236 *REDEMPTION*: Book IV

Wrought Miracles thro all the region round,
 And made *Judea* with his fame resound.
 And when the woman, who had long endur'd
 An obstinate disease, at length was cur'd
 By her clandestine touching of his vest,
 While he was with a crowd surrounding prest,
 Th' Apostle says, that *Christ* the force perceiv'd
 To issue from him, which her flux reliev'd.
 By which to all reflecting minds 'tis clear,
 That wondrous virtue did in *Christ* inhere,
 Which did in healing Miracles appear.
 Besides, the Saviour said, that he had pow'r
 To lay his life down, and his life restore,
 Then must the pow'r of raising from the dead
 Have been within him, as himself had said.
 Tis evident from hence, as noon day light,
 That the Redeemer's unresisted might

Did in himself remain, by which he wrought
Wonders and signs, his doctrine to promote.

What course will now the shifting *Arian* take?
He must some new-devis'd objections make,
And all his past inept replies forsake.
Still will he grope in darkness for the way
Of truth divine, in such a blaze of day?
Still hope immortal reason to defeat
By baffled schemes and notions obsolete?
Notions so wild, that never to the brain
Could by the common road admission gain,
But by some parting in the head must find
A passage open to th' unguarded mind.



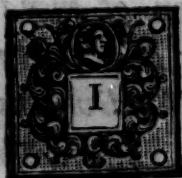


THE
 ARGUMENT
 OF THE
 FIFTH BOOK.

The introduction; several plain texts of Scripture, that evidently prove the strict Divinity of Christ vindicated and cleared from the absurd and ridiculous interpretation of the Socinians: For instance, those texts that ascribe to him the creation of heaven and earth; that say of him that he made the Angels, and assert that in the beginning he was with God, and was God. The schools of learning erected in Greece were soon broken by contention, and divided into parties, while
 one

one leading philosopher to become the founder of a new Sect, supplanted and sunk the school of another: Every day some new fangled notions were started, and, tho' ever so vain and unreasonable, were maintained with ardor and party-heats by obstinate hereticks in philosophy. These furious wars, in which the schools were engag'd, continued with various success and frequent revolutions, till they had laid waste the nurseries of knowledge, destroy'd all learning, and overspread the Colleges of Athens with avow'd ignorance and scepticism. In like manner, soon after the Christian institution was establish'd many of an heretical turn of mind, or vainly aspiring to be the heads of a party, rent the Church by divisions and subdivisions, sometimes by whole, sometimes by half-heresy till her peace was greatly disturb'd, and her unity miserably broken. At length Arius arose, a bold enterprizing Genius, who attack'd the very Being of the Christian Religion, by asserting that the founder of it was but a creature. In opposition to whose sect, the Christians, that defended the divinity of Christ were called Catholicks or the Orthodox. Another great Argument for Christ's Divinity urg'd at
large

large from the several places in Scripture, that allow or enjoyn Divine Worship to be paid to our Saviour: Various texts cited for this purpose, and vindicated from the unreasonable expositions and false criticisms of the Adversary. Those Arian leaders who deny the Divinity of Christ in the strictest sense, and will not speak plainly, and say that he is a Creature, must suppose, but most absurdly, a middle Being between the supreme God and a Creature.



IN the past pages we have clearly shown,
That Christians Christ, as God supreme, should own.

From his Almighty Pow'r, that all things made,
Rear'd the round earth, and the wide heav'ns display'd.

Will the bold *Arian* still prolong the fight?

Vanquish'd and sunk withstand prevailing light?

BOOK V. A DIVINE POEM. 241

Still undismay'd by ignominious scars
 And ghastly wounds renew unequal wars
 Will he by penal strong delusion blind,
 Inflexible and obstinate of mind,
 His strength exhausted, strive with impious toil,
 The Savior of his Godhead to despoil
 If so, then let new forces be enroll'd
 Fit to engage; for those employ'd of old,
 And foil'd so often, will the conqueror know,
 Think on past routs, and face no more the foe.
 Nor let them stale evasive arts repeat,
 Nor to defenceless haunts and holds retreat.
 Barren of thought, say, can you not invent
 Some untried weapon, some new argument?
 Can you no glosses yet unheard of find,
 No explanation to surprize the mind,
 Which, howsoever impotent and vain,
 By novelty at least may entertain?

S

Must

Must, *Waterland*, thy course of glory stand,
 And for new triumphs new supplies demand
 In vain? tis likely; for the broken foe
 Can no new levies for the combat show;
 Not will he, if not ignorant of shame,
 Force thee for ever to subdue the same.

But e'er we farther press in this dispute
 The *Arian*, and his groundless scheme confute,
 Let us a while *Socinian* doctors hear,
 Who unconvinc'd by what we urge appear:
 Attentive then observe th' erroneous way,
 By which from truth reveal'd these Sages stray.

By the blest Son, the sacred page has said (a),
 In the beginning earth and heav'n were made:
 How will the criticks this clear text evade?

(a) John i.

That

That is, say they, when Gospel-times begun,
 The moral world was new made by the Son,
 While he with his religion blest'd mankind,
 Enjoyn'd new precepts, and the old refin'd.
 Say, does it not astonishment create,
 That disputants should in this high debate
 Such forc'd constructions of plain texts invent,
 And to their dreams and fancies claim assent,
 Without one reason, proof, or argument?
 Tell us, *Socinus*, tells us, *Crellius*, where
 One instance does in sacred texts appear,
 That by this phrase, *to make the world*, no more
 Is meant, than to refine laws made before,
 To add new rules of life, and old restore?
 If this be just, then fancy's bold effort
 May any sense from any text extort:
 And yet these men once great applause acquir'd,
 For sense acute and reasoning force admir'd;

What are the masters of the *Grecian* schools,
 Renown'd for science, art, and moral rules,
 Who did th' *Athenian* colleges adorn,
 And on the world, as barb'rous, look'd with scorn,
 Compar'd with wits so subtile and refin'd,
 As ours of *Anti-trinitarian* kind;
 Who eager thro' the world to spread their name,
 And to their schools procure unrival'd fame,
 Contend with studious labour to procure
 Notions and wild constructions, that obscure
 Plain Scripture-phrases, and with artfull night
 Cloud truth reveal'd, and stifle Nature's light?

Another flagrant instance now behold,
 How these sagacious masters texts unfold,
 And open by the glosses which they teach,
 Till they surpass all understanding's reach,

For these judicious heads with wit abound,
And genius fit all Scripture to confound,
And darken easy places, which appear,
Till they explain them, as the noon-day clear

Fully the sacred oracles assert (b),
The Son of God not only did exert
In rearing this corporeal frame his might,
But that he made the heavenly seats of light,
With all their bless'd inhabitants, the host
Of Angels, who immortal vigor boast;
That thrones and powers and glorious potentates,
Dominions, princes, and seraphick states,
And all the bright celestial colonies,
And blissful natives, that possess the skies,
To him, as to their Maker, owe their birth,
Who, as clear texts affirm (c), made heav'n and earth.

(b) Col. i.

(c) Col. i. 16.

246 *REDEMPTION:* Book V.

What will to this our fam'd expounders say?
 How will their learning make the sense away?
 How must they labour, turn, and shift, and wrest
 The words, to stifle what is there confess'd,
 That they the obvious meaning may decline,
 And sink the evidence of light divine?
 'Tis true, say they, the Son did Angels make,
 But 'tis, the criticks urge, a great mistake
 To think he made those glorious beings so,
 That from his pow'r they did created flow:
 How then? say they, the Scripture to evade,
 He did not make, but found them ready made;
 And yet he made them too, that is, dispos'd,
 Marshal'd and rang'd th' angelick world, enclos'd
 In the great empire God to him had giv'n,
 And order'd his wide monarchy of heav'n.
 Of vast imagination see a flight,
 How high they soar above all human sight?

An

An effort worthy of superior wit,
 And solid judgment for decision fit.
 Thus in a sense they sacred texts expound,
 Of which the Scriptures are unconscious found.
 What *Oedipus* this meaning could have gueſt,
 Had not great criticks been constrain'd to wreſt
 It out by art, to ſerve a cauſe diſtreſt?
 If we ſuch bold precarious głoſſes grant,
 God's revelation will another want;
 For what we now believe he has reveal'd
 Does in plain words involv'd lie ſo conceal'd,
 As theſe men judge, that it eludes the ſight,
 And only can by force be brought to light.
 With how much labour ſcripture they oppreſs,
 And incoherent explanations dreſs,
 To make reluctant texts their mind confeſs?
 Ask, when 'tis ſaid, *Chriſt* heav'n and earth has made,
 How they ſuch full expreſſions will evade?

He made the heav'n and earth, they thus expound,
 He did the Christian institution found,
 And gave the moral world new rules, to raise
 Nature's dim light, and teach celestial ways.
 Ask, if he made th' angelick pow'rs, and they
 To this enquiry, will, as mention'd, say,
 That sovereign of th' angelick orders he
 Model'd and rang'd th' immortal hierarchy,
 And a wise scheme of civil empire laid,
 By all the heavenly race to be obey'd;
 For right the sophists judg'd, they must decline
 To say, that *Christ* their morals did refine.
 What various senses do these wits employ
 Of the word, *made*, plain Scripture to destroy?
 Maker of all things, some men publish, means
 An under active cause, that intervenes;
 Some, he that all things made, say, does denote
 One, who the scheme of pure religion taught:

Now to make all things signifies no more,
 Than o'er the angels, who were made before,
 To fix the model of imperial pow'r.

Thus inconsistent in their weak defence,
 On the word *made* they fix with violence
 A civil, natural, and a moral sense.
 And from clear texts so long their meaning take,
 Till he that all things made did nothing make:
 They this and that way wind, and scriptures strain,
 Till they a meaning to their purpose gain.

Of they compell them foreign sense to speak,
 Their order now, now their connexion break,
 And boldly, as their cause it best promotes,
 Make the same words exprefs repugnant thoughts,
 Of they transpose a particle or change,
 Or else the words in a new manner range;

At pleasure add, at pleasure take away,
 To make the wrested text their will obey :
 But if its light does uncontroll'd appear,
 The meaning obvious and th' expression clear,
 To bold and desp'rate methods, see, they fly,
 And cut in two the knot they can't untie ;
 As spurious they those sacred words efface,
 And leave them not in books inspir'd a place,
 But with a more than pontifical pride
 Expunge the texts, that fight against their side.

To us the arts and priveleges grant,
 Which in expounding texts these arrogant
 And hard unblushing disputants employ,
 To change, or Scripture meaning to destroy,
 And furnish'd with their engines, by their use
 From any phrase we'll any sense produce.

For instance we this province take, to prove,
That from the world the Scriptures God remove;
To back th' Assertion, see, these very Words,
There is no God, the sacred book records:
Tis true, with periods we that sentence bound,
Enclose and fence it from the texts around,
And cut off all connexion, whence the foe
Might the true import of that passage know;
And this th' opponents may allow with ease,
Who stop, and change a sentence, as they please,
To make some unexpected meaning rise,
Which must the starting reader's mind surprise.

Ler us a fresh example now impart
Of fine invention and evasive art.
The Word, so says th' inspir'd apostle (*d*), was
In the beginning; now that well known phrase

(*d*) John i. 1, 2.

Imports

252 *REDEMPTION:* Book V.

Imports in language of the Scripture cast,
 Before all time, and from all ages past:
 E'er the carulean fields were yet display'd,
 The mountains rear'd, or earth's foundation laid,
 Then was the word with God, and then was God;
 Now if we seek not shades and ways untrod,
 Then, that he's God supreme, it must be own'd,
 And that he ever sat in heav'n enthron'd.

Now to elude this strong resistless light,
 And cast a mist before the reader's sight,
 Behold with wond'ring eyes a noble flight;
 A flight of genius vast, and wit sublime,
 That does o'er all exalted learning climb.
 That the Redeemer was with God, say they,
 Is true; but how? why, he was caught away
 From this low ball, and suddenly convey'd
 To the third heav'ns, like *Paul*, and there he stayed

Till

BOOK V. A DIVINE POEM. 253

Till he was furnish'd with instructive light,
How to erect and guide his church aright;
What mysteries to reveal, what rules enjoin,
And how dark nature's precepts to refine.
What points profound can sons of science teach?
What heights can vast imagination reach?
Behold the world bereft of promis'd day,
O'erwhelm'd in thick *Egyptian* darkness lay,
Till these *Socinian* luminaries shone,
And bless'd mankind with things before unknown.
Hail wits unrival'd! you have sense engross'd,
At your decease all knowledge must be lost.
The Christian world will be involv'd in night,
Nor will a soul be left, that argues right:
Truth will be sunk, nor will one head remain
Able the clearest Scripture to explain.

At

At reason's just tribunal let us try
 This wond'rous gloss, on which the foes rely.
 A fiction wild, a legendary dream,
 Invented to support an empty scheme
 By subtilty elusive; which the wise
 Impartial reader will at sight despise.
 Say, ye presumptuous race of criticks, say,
 If you at least will scripture texts obey,
 Where do the sacred volumes once suggest
 The faintest hint, where is a word exprest,
 Or the least glimpse of revelation giv'n,
 That *Christ* was carried up from earth to heav'n,
 To be instructed, how he should refine
 Degenerate moral rules by light divine,
 And lay the wond'rous plan, at his descent,
 Of his blest laws and sacred government ?

This arbitrary story we deny,
 And all your strength to make it good defy:
 You grant, for this there's no divine record,
 But ask us to believe you on your word.

Amazing 'tis, that men, who make pretence
 To clearer reason, and superior sense,
 Should in a case of such importance vent
 Their notions, yet produce no argument,
 No single proof, their glosses to sustain,
 And yet their foes of ignorance arraign.
 This is to dogmatize and not dispute,
 And by despotick dictates to confute.
 Since nothing mention'd in th' inspir'd records
 To their new fiction countenance affords,
 And since these champions in their own excuse,
 Can cite no Scripture, and no proof produce,

We

256 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK V.

We their imagin'd scheme with scorn reject,
Which should with shame o'erspread th' audacious
Sect,

Who on the sacred text impose a sense
By fraud and unexampled violence.

When learning first did tender dawn display
O'er subtile *Greece*, and promis'd riper day,
Letters and science had a swift increase,
And colleges a while were bless'd with peace;
But not long so; soon emulation rose,
And pride and envy made scholastick foes.
Greece by divisions numberless was split,
Clouded by learning, and embroil'd with wit.
Now Sect with Sect, and School with School en-
gag'd,
And Sages war with adverse Sages wag'd.

BOOK V. A DIVINE POEM. 257

Each genius bent to gain a leader's name,
 And thro' the world to propagate his fame
 Labour'd all rival masters to dethrone,
 To sink their credit, and advance his own.
 The *Stoick* pow'rs did *Socrates* invade,
 And wide destruction of his doctrine made:
 These *Aristippus* did in turn assail,
 With reasons most adapted to prevail
 O'er men with sensual Inclinations born,
 And with their spoils did his loose school adorn.
Plato his much applauded college rear'd,
 A pow'rful prince of learning long rever'd;
 Till enterprizing *Aristotle*, bred
 At this great teacher's feet, to rule as head
 Of a new sect, and be thro' *Greece* admir'd,
 Against his master and his scheme conspir'd;
 O'er *Plato* he prevailed, and in his stead
 Reign'd, and impos'd his philosophick creed.

T

Pytha-

Pythagoras did a wide empire boast,
 Fix'd in new *Greece*, where *Adria's* waves are tost,
 Till *Epicurus*, impious, vain, and lewd,
 Rais'd fierce rebellion, and this school subdued,
 And chang'd it to a garden sown with seeds
 Of baneful plants, and rank unwholsome weeds.

And now unnumber'd schisms the schools divide,
 O'er-run with envy, wanton wit, and pride :
 Gray-headed Triflers did with learning play,
 And freely thought philosophy away.
 For now the novel Academicks own,
 That nothing was discovered, nothing known ;
 That while the proofs press'd equal every way,
 The mind must dubious in suspension stay,
 Repel no reason's force, and none obey :
 That sacred science did its station keep
 In a profound unfathomable Deep,

Which

Which shallow human minds can never reach,
 Nor to the light from the dark bottom fetch.
 Now beauteous truth, of high celestial race,
 Deserted this inhospitable place,
 From Sages vain and wrangling wits withdrew,
 Left the litigious Sects, and upwards flew.

The envy, pride, and lust of fame and pow'r,
 Which did *Athenian* nurseries devour,
 We in religious colleges may see,
 As fatal prov'd, as in philosophy.
 Witness the num'rous Sectaries of old,
 In the first Christian registers inroll'd:
 Some to the doctrines of *Cerintus* bred,
 Some by *Sabellius*, some by *Magus* led,
 And some, who *Manicheus* own'd as head.
 But the chief swarms and foul pernicious broods,
 Offspring deform'd, and odious brotherhoods,

Descended from the *Gnostick* fertile race,
 Who soon unchristian doctrines did embrace,
 And were to different heresies inclin'd,
 By their phantastick different turns of mind.

Arius at length a daring genius rose,
 Religion's points essential to oppose,
 And resolute the pillars to subvert
 Of Christian faith, did arrogant assert,
 The Son of God, whose laws the Church obey'd,
 Was not eternal, but a being made,
 Whom he with greater excellence endow'd,
 Than to the highest Seraph is allow'd,
 And own'd, he did as king deputed reign
 O'er all the creatures, heav'n and earth contain;
 But granted not, he was in substance one
 With the great God and his coeval Son,

*

This

This heresy, that shook th' establish'd frame
 Of Christian faith, soon popular became;
 Till the contagion reach'd th' imperial throne,
 And *Arian* monarchs now impatient grown
 Of contradiction, with inhuman rage
 By fire and sword did violent engage
 To force into the mind pretended light,
 And into false belief the world affright.
 These red with slaughter, when by none withstood,
 With reeking hands and garments roll'd in blood
 Approach'd the Prince of peace, and God of love,
 As he their endless murders would approve.
 Distracted pow'rs, that could believe, the sword
 Plung'd in his vor'ries hearts would please their Lord?

Their offspring now, 'tis true, compulsion blame,
 All impositions and all tests disclaim,
 Yet is their hate, tho' not their pow'r, the same.
 Since now unarm'd a hearing they demand,
 And ask, that force coercive we disband,
 Willing by reason's light to fall or stand,
 We waive the privilege of civil laws;
 Let them at reason's bar defend their cause:
 Again in Scripture-arms we take the field
 To make the vain presumptuous *Arian* yield.

We by the sacred oracles are taught (e),
 That Satan up to a high mountain caught,
 The blest Redeemer thro' the steepy air,
 Prepar'd to trie his meditated snare;

(e) Mat. iv. 8, 9, 10.

Then by some artful manner open laid
 The earth's wide face, and all its wealth display'd;
 Did its great empires, and fair cities shew,
 And bad him all this pow'r and splendor view;
 Then said; behold, all these I give to thee,
 Do thou but prostrate fall, and worship me.
 Then answer'd thus the Mediator Lord;
 The books inspir'd this high command record,
Thou to the Lord thy God shalt worship pay,
Him shalt thou serve, and him alone obey.

Remark, th' apostate Angel does not press
 The Lord Messiah, worship to address
 To him, as God, but ask'd the outward sign
 Of adoration and respect divine,
 And left the secret thought within his breast,
 To be directed as it pleas'd him best:

Yet did the Saviour this request deny,
 Because, as we infer from his reply,
 He judg'd the outward act idolatry.

An act, which all observers would suppose
 From inward rev'rence of the object flows :
 Nor can spectators in the mind divide
 Establish'd signs and objects signified,
 Hence he, that on an idol's altar throws
 Rich incense, or before an image bows,
 Or on unhallow'd victims feasting sits,
 Interpreted idolatry commits,
 For let his thoughts be e'er so innocent,
 Observers will believe, 'tis his intent
 Worship divine as certainly to shew,
 As the sincerest votary can do.

Hence

Hence the blest martyrs did such acts refuse,
And rather death than feign'd compliance chuse,
Assur'd the inward thought could not the fact excuse.

Then *Arians*, who high adoration pay,
And praise divine to the Lord *Christ* convey,
If he is but a creature, must contract
The highest guilt by such an impious act.

They urge, that God has made his pleasure known,
That men to him the Father, and his Son,
Should equal adoration pay; in vain;
Behold, with ease we make this subject plain,
That Men one God should worship, one alone,
We the first dictate of right reason own,
And will this God by positive commands
Repeal a doctrine, which establish'd stands

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Ev'n in the nature of the things, and say
 We should not reason's strongest light obey?
 Then moral obligations would be void,
 And Nature's law for ever be destroy'd:
 Thus Christian precepts would with Nature's fight,
 And not improve, but ruin moral light.
 Thus, while the grounds, why God alone can claim
 Worship divine, for ever are the same,
 That law for ever must be unrepeal'd,
 Or else a moral rule, and one reveal'd,
 Repugnant must each other's force suspend;
 And here let *Arian* wit's their cause defend.
 Besides, these men th' Ideas must confound
 Of God and Creature, if mankind are bound
 To pay the Saviour honours most sublime,
 A God by courtesy, and made in time.
 If this be just, then must we reconcile
 The warring terms of contradiction, while

Worship

Worship divine, and signs that signify
 Unlimited perfection, we apply
 To a created finite deity,

Collected here, in reason's strength secure,
 We stand, and all our foes assaults endure.
 God's positive commands ne'er supercede
 Precepts, which moral obligations plead;
 He now and then for some important end
 May Nature's law and settled course suspend;
 But can a law of Nature be destroy'd;
 And reason's rule be made for ever void?
 The nature and the properties of things
 Would then be chang'd, whence moral duty springs;
 And thus the mind must inbred light despise,
 And break the order of her faculties,
 While to a creature men adoring bow,
 Which all right reason's dictates disallow.

As

As it transcends th' eternal's boundless might
 Once to create a being infinire,
 For that plain contradiction would imply,
 And introduce of Gods plurality,
 So he on none such honours e'er bestows,
 Which must perfections infinite suppose;
 This in our thoughts would not ideas bound,
 But would with finite infinite confound;
 The creature and Creator would be join'd
 In indistinct conceptions in the mind.

How will th' opponents now maintain their
 cause,

Who tell us, that to strengthen Nature's laws,
 And clear dim reason, was the sole design
 Of *Christ's* appearance, and his scheme divine;

Whe

When 'tis most plain, that if they argue right,
It must extinguish Nature's earliest light,
It must of things the moral Nature change,
And in the mind repugnant dictates range.

'Tis Nature's precept, that we should adore
One God alone, one God alone implore,
Founded on this impossibility,
That the same names and honours should agree
To beings, which do no proportion own,
One a Creator and a Creature one;
Of perfect wisdom that and boundless might,
A self-existent unexpiring light,
Essential life, the source of good immense,
This of dependent finite excellence.
Now since we must by God's commands abide,
And worship give to him, and none beside,

And

And since such worship we, as bound, convey
 And the sublimest adoration pay
 To the blest Saviour, those, who thence infer
 The Savior's real Godhead, cannot err.
 If we are bid to worship God alone,
 And yet to worship *Christ*, *Christ* must be one
 With the great God, or else we must believe,
 That we may worship to a creature give.

How will the *Arian* Sect their charge main-
 tain

Against the Demon-worshippers? in vain
 They such of high idolatry arraign;
 Those will retort, th' accusers must condemn
 Their own vile practise while they censure them.
 What they'll allege, if prostrate we adore
 Heroes and demigods, who are no more

That

Than gods by office, gods by courtesy,
 Heav'n's ministers, and legates of the sky?
 Can you as grossly impious us upbraid,
 Who say religious worship may be paid
 To *Christ*, who is not God supreme, but one
 That's God by office, tho' by Nature none?

Perhaps the shifting *Arian* will reply,
 We worship *Christ* the Lord, as God most high,
 Because on him th' Almighty did confer
 The dignity of his first minister,
 And viceroy of his various kingdoms, whence
 He does a God subordinate commence,
 And as a mighty intercessor own'd
 Sits high in heav'n, at God's right hand enthron'd;
 In vain, for will not then the Pagans say,
 That on as strong prevailing reasons they
 Religious worship to their demons pay?

Demons

Demons by them believ'd to have the care
 Of all things in the sea, and earth, and air,
 And to enjoy establish'd empire there.
 That they successful intercessors prove,
 And bring to mortals blessings from above:
 And hence, they'll say, we argue, God supreme
 Our Demon-worship never will condemn,
 If he religious honours does enjoin
 To one, yon own, by Nature not divine,
 Only endow'd with delegated pow'rs,
 And who no more is God supreme, than ours.

Besides, we urge, since God does this allow (f),
 That every knee in heav'n and earth shall bow,
 And Adoration to the Saviour pay,
 And to him worship, like his own, convey,

(f) Phil. ii. 10.

The Son of God, in person and in name
Distinct, is with the Father God the same.

And now to carry farther this dispute,
And the new scheme of sophists to confute,
See, God has said (*g*), if *Arians* will believe,
He'll not his glory to another give.
Then let the *Arian*, who plain Scripture mocks,
Now hardy contradict the orthodox,
And now himself, at least th' Almighty, spare,
And of arraigning truth itself beware.
Ne'er will th' obdurate heretick agree
To diff'rent persons in the Deity,
But daring makes, that doctrine to evade,
Two Gods, one uncreated and one made;
While adoration to our Lord is paid.

(*g*) Isa. xlii. 8. xlviii. 11.

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Be it allow'd, that God did men enjoin
 To worship *Christ* with modes and rites divine;
 For this just notion ardent we contend,
 And by its light our principles defend;
 For if by grant divine our Lord can claim
 Like veneration, and regards the same
 As God most high, whose solemn words declare,
 He'll not his glory with another share;
Christ must be own'd eternal God by all,
 He, whom the sacred Books *Jehovah* call;
 Or there are Gods supreme in number two,
 To whom the same divine respects are due.

When *Christ* had giv'n the man born blind
 his sight,
 And overspread his mind with heav'nly light,

BOOK V. A DIVINE POEM. 275

He prostrate fell before our Saviour Lord,
 And the restorer of his eyes ador'd (b),
 Who did not this, as criminal, accuse,
 Nor the high honour profer'd him refuse.
 This will to all reflecting Christians shew,
 Religious worship to their Lord is due,
 Since he accepted such respect divine,
 Which yet the highest angels did decline (i),
 Bidding the erring worshiper forbear,
 And gave this reason, we but creatures are,
 The ministers of heav'n to you for good,
 And would not be for gods misunderstood.
 And yet the blest angelick hierarchy,
 God's officers and princes of the sky,
 Who by his high command the world divide,
 And viceroys o'er the canton'd realms preside,

(b) John. ix. 38

(i) Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

On that account the venerable name
 Of deities subordinate may claim,
 As well as *Christ*, if he enjoys no more
 Than an inferior delegated pow'r.
 Be it consider'd, that th' eternal mind,
 The gospel yet unwrit, had not enjoin'd,
 That proper worship should to *Christ* to be paid;
 And therefore here the *Arian* cannot plead
 A positive command, that *Christ* the Lord
 Should with religious honours be ador'd:
 Hence the blind man restor'd believ'd it true,
 That *Christ* was God supreme, and therefore knew,
 The highest adoration was his due:
 And this important truth our Lord confess'd,
 While he such worship own'd to him address'd,
 Nor once rebuk'd the worshiper, as one,
 Who had an act of irreligion done,

Which if our Lord had a mere creature been,
While good and just, he must have blam'd as sin.

The Pagan world, besides the God supreme,
Did in their impious theologick scheme,
Blind and misled by strong delusion, place
Of pow'rs created an unnumber'd race,
Subordinate inferior deities,
And peopled with unnative gods the skies.
These, they affirm'd, did still assiduous stand
Round the supreme, to watch his high command,
And his swift envoys took commission'd flight
Reciprocal from empirean heights,
To earth, and thence thro' known aerial roads
And gulphs of sky back to their blest abodes.
These they ador'd, to these they solemn pray'd,
And in distress devoutly cry'd for aid,

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These too as intercessors they retain'd,
By whom, they thought, in heav'n they favour gain'd,
And did protection from those guardians crave,
Whose lifeless limbs lay mouldring in the grave.

This doctrine about demons, creatures rais'd
To dignity divine, ador'd and prais'd
With solemn worship, by the jealous Lord,
The God of Gods, th' Almighty, was abhor'd.
This worship he idolatry declar'd,
And lest the favour'd tribes should be ensnar'd
By Pagan rites, he by his high command
Expell'd th' unhallow'd practice from the land.
Nor did the *Jews* his anger more provoke
Against their realm, than when they impious broke
This first, this chief, this fundamental law,
Which on their heads did sure destruction draw.

Against them God, 'to scourge this hateful crime,
 Brought his fierce armies from a distant clime;
 Refus'd their empire longer to uphold,
 And his own land to Pagan monarchs fold.

See, when he said (k), *They should noth ave be-
 fore*

His Face more Gods, but only him adore,

He said not; should their worship they convey

To him, nor let it in the image stay,

But did that honour to his throne direct,

The final object of divine respect,

Hethen well pleas'd would creature-worship own,

And grant, that thus they worship'd him alone.

No, he in words unlimited forbad

Religious honour to another paid,

Nor one exception qualifying made,

(k) Exod. xx. 3.

Nor did he say, his pow'r did e'er create
 A lord, or prince, or god subordinate,
 Whom men, as he commanded, should adore
 With rites divine, his clemency implore,
 And send their pray'rs and praises to his throne
 High in the heav'ns, as to th' Almighty's own;
 And to him should ascribe God's certain right
 Salvation, glory, majesty, and might (1)
 Equal to that we give to God most high;
 No, this he still did absolute deny,
 And said, he would with none his honour share,
 Nor in his glory e'er a partner bear.
 Hence 'tis to all of thought impartial plain,
 No limitation did his law restrain;
 Convinç'd by reason's force we hence conclude,
 Th' Almighty's words all under-pow'rs exclude,

(1) Rev. v. 13, 14. vii. 10, 11, 10.

All gods by office and commission made,
From worship, such as to himself is paid.

O *Rome*, thy church infallible has err'd,
Which æmulous of Pagan rites, transfer'd
This demon-worship to the num'rous lands
To which thy pontiffs send their proud commands,
By spurious rev'rence, superstitious dread,
And false humility thy vot'ries led
Scarce will approach th' Almighty's Majesty,
But to created intercessors fly,
To saints and angels adoration pay,
And prostrate in their temples ardent pray,
That they would bear propitious to the throne
Of God their pray'rs, assist them with their own,
And by their merit wrath divine atone.
Thousands of mediators they enroll,
That equal, or exceed, the Pagan scroll,

And

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And hence they heathen lands in guilt outvie,
These did in practice nature's light denie,
Those that, and revelation's too desie.

But we may *Rome* and Pagan notions free
From the black charge of gross idolatry,
If true religious worship may be paid
To gods inferior and to beings made :
And yet the blest redeemer is no more
In the esteem of numbers, who adore
His person, and his aid divine implore.

In vain they urge, that strict divine respect
They still to God supreme alone direct,
And when to *Christ* they the same honours send,
They do not secret in their mind intend
The uncreated God most high, but one
Subordinate, and who in time begun :

Wil

BOOK V. A DIVINE POEM. 283

Will not old Pagan and new Christian *Rome*,
Whose sons to worship demon-gods presume,
Say, they these under-deities no more,
Than *Arians* *Jesus*, finally adore:
But that thro' these, with pure intention, they
Worship divine to the most high convey:
Then, *Arians*, own your gross idolatry,
Or from that guilt pronounce the Pagan free.

The Books inspir'd say (*m*) *Christ* is rais'd on high
Above th' angelick natives of the sky;
Above all powers, dominions, potentates,
Great dignities, seraphick thrones and states,
Who to their king the mediator low
Bow down in adoration, and bestow
Such names divine and honours, which are shown
To the supreme eternal God alone.

(*m*) Ephes. i. 21, 22. Phil. ii. 9. Col. ii. 10. Heb. i.

(n) To which of all the angels did he say,
 Who dwell in bright abodes and endless day,
 " Sit thou enthron'd in bliss on my right hand,
 " Till I extend thy uncontroll'd command
 " O'er all thy proud opposers, who shall lie
 " Low at thy footstool, and for mercy crie?

He in the same doxologies is joyn'd,
 Which are ascrib'd to God, th' Eternal Mind (o)
 " Salvation, glory, majesty and might,
 " Praise and renown, and empire infinite,
 " To him that sits high on the throne in heav'n,
 " And to the Lamb, for evermore be giv'n.
 Hence our opposers must allow, the Son
 With the blest Father is in essence one,
 Or will by reason be compell'd to say,
 They the same act of adoration pay

(n) Heb. i. 13.

(o) Rev. v. 11, 12, 13, 14.

To God and to a creature, and assign
Worship to both in a strict sense divine.

Now who to stand by this conclusion dare,
That gods by office, who but creatures are,
May with their Maker adoration share?

Is not a creature of the noblest kind
At as true distance infinite disjoin'd

From the eternal Maker, God most high,
As his less wondrous works, a worm or fly?

Should princes bid their subjects honour pay
To a poor groom in the same words and way,

As when they worship him and favours pray?

Or should they bid a monarch's envoy crave

A solemn audience of an abject slave,

Or some domestick favour'd animal,

Would not observers this distraction call?

Yet is it more absurd and gross, to join

God and a creature in one act divine.

Of worship; for of distance voids immense,
 And gulphs, unconscious of circumference,
 Th' eternal self-existent God-head part
 From all things, which did into being start
 At his command; as well th' angelick race,
 As those, that swim the flood, their native place,
 Graze the green earth, or creep along its face.

Now see, between a slave and princes crown'd
 Is great alliance, great proportion, found;
 For each is finite, each a creature, each
 Have understandings of a bounded reach:
 Besides their human nature is the same,
 And they alike the common species claim.
 And animals agree with kings thus far,
 That both are creatures and both living are.
 Now if the Saviour only is allow'd
 To be a creature, let him be endow'd

With

With excellence, dominion, glory, might,
 And all perfections short of infinite,
 There will a vaster disproportion be
 Between him and th' Almighty's majesty
 Not made nor circumscrib'd, than we can find
 Between low mortals and th' angelick kind:
 Between a peasant and a prince renown'd,
 A creeping insect and a Sage profound.
 Then see, how this does common sense invade,
 That the Creator and a being made
 May be ador'd in the same words and ways;
 This doctrine impious heresy betrays.

'Tis the position of our *Arian* tribe;
 To which some great *Socinian* chiefs subscribe,
 That th' appellation God the Scriptures give
 In no respect but what is relative:

Né'er

Ne'er to th' Almighty is that name allow'd,
 But as with empire and with pow'r endow'd,
 And that the worship, which to him we owe,
 Does from his title of dominion flow.
 Hence those, say they, the Scripture gods declares,
 Who by his pow'r have delegated shares,
 And rule by his commission; these, say they,
 Are gods inferior by deputed sway.

And thus far *Christ*, as truly God, they own,
 But place him only on an under-throne;
 While they contend, he only has pretence
 In this improper metaphorick sence
 To be acknowledg'd God, yet they assign
 To Jesus honours properly divine:
 Prostrate to him they solemn pray'r address,
 And adoration strictly such expresses,

The same as we direct to God supreme:

Behold the *Anti-trinitarian* scheme.

We ask, if when to *Christ* they worship pay,
 That honour goes no farther; or if they
 To God thro' *Christ* their worship still convey?
 If that, behold unmask'd idolatry,
 While to a creature they devout apply
 Titles and honours, as to God most high;
 A creature, whom they such ev'n then allow,
 When they in adoration to him bow:
 If this, the *Arians* can't their cause sustain,
 They are idolaters, and plead in vain,
 Their impious scheme and practice to protect,
 That when to *Christ* they pay divine respect,
 Which they to God supreme thro' him direct,
 Their act of adoration is but one,
 And is address'd to God most high alone.

If men to God thro' *Christ* may worship send,
 Because an under-god, and not offend,
 They may to kings strict adoration pay,
 If worship they thro' kings to God convey :
 For do not sov'reign lords and princes shine,
 Adorn'd with splendid rays of pow'r divine,
 And therefore are inferior Gods, and own'd
 As such by God, by his command entron'd:
 Viceroy's invested with a great degree
 Of his imperial high authority.
 Thus kings are Scripture-gods, existing, true,
 Proper, unfeign'd, and gods by Office too,
 As well as *Christ*, according to the scheme
 Of some great *Arians*, under God supreme ;
 Then are they mediate gods for worship fit,
 And may, to be ador'd, exalted sit :
 And say, what crime their vot'ries would commit,

If they, like *Arians*, their divine respect
 Do thro' those kings to God most high direct?
 Tis true, *Christ's* empire vastly theirs exceeds,
 But this of species no distinction breeds,
 But only of degree the diff'rence brings,
 For sov'reigns great or small alike are kings;
 And have an equal right, as they are so,
 To honours, which from pow'r and empire flow;
 For the school-maxim has unshaken stood,
 "From as 'tis such to all, the sequel's good."

And here hard driv'n some, who the deity
 Of the Redeemer arrogant deny,
 Would fain by disingenuous shifts evade
 The consequence, that he's a being made:
 Nor will they, tho' intreated, make it known,
 Whether they *Christ* as a mere creature own.

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Here, see, what master-strokes of genius shine,
 What elevated thoughts, what sense divine ;
 These disputants, with wit superior crown'd,
 A middle being have successful found,
 Who is not caus'd, nor yet the causeless cause,
 And who, tho' this opposes reason's laws,
 From the Almighty's actual, will arose,
 Yet not his being to creation owes.
 As thy first atoms, *Carus*, in their flight
 Incln'd, yet form'd no flanting line, nor right,
 But one, that in a manner somewhat like,
 And wanting but a little, was oblique ;
 * So these wise masters in their scheme abstruse
 A strange invented being introduce,
 Who is divine almost, and as it were,
 Not God supreme, but something very near.

* As has been urg'd in *The modern Arian unmask'd*.

And this, how wild soever it may sound,
 Will be the doctrine of those *Arians* found,
 Who will not *Christ* as God supreme avow,
 Nor yet to be a creature him allow.

Would these presumptuous men the world persuade,
 That *Christ* is neither made, nor yet unmade;
 Not self-existent, nor created, one
 Who had beginning, and yet ne'er begun?
 But while these wily disputants deny
 The Saviour's strict and proper deity,
 Yet own he's not a creature, let them here
 Their sentiments from contradiction clear;
 Let them explain their scheme, and let us see
 How their repugnant notions can agree.

If *Anti-trinitarian* sects alone
 Have the true meaning of the Gospel known,
 Then since the Christian doctrine was reveal'd,
 Celestial truth has kept her head conceal'd
 In clouds and darkness, while no man was found
 In many ages past, who could expound
 Scriptures of vast importance, which concern
 Each individual of the Church to learn:
 And then the promis'd Spirit, who should guide
 Into all truth the Christian, has denied
 To yield due aid, those errors to avoid,
 By which ev'n Nature's dictates are destroy'd;
 And suffer'd long the Christian world to lie
 Plung'd in the depths of gross idolatry.
 Whilst they by honouring *Christ* (but how de-
 ceiv'd!)

Ador'd a creature, whom they God believ'd.

And

And thus the Saviour, if they argue right,
That bliss and life immortal brought to light,
Has not himself reveal'd, nor made it known,
What of his nature we are bound to own.
Hard fate, if Christians have thro' ages paid
The highest worship to a being made,
By Scripture's clearest evidence betray'd!





THE
 ARGUMENT
 OF THE
 SIXTH BOOK.

Arians defeated by Scripture fly in vain for refuge to the schools, where they obscure revelation with false learning and vain philosophy. If the revelation be sufficiently prov'd of any assertion concerning the essence of God, it is in vain to appeal to the nature of the thing, and urge that it is inconsistent with reason, which being finite is utterly unable to search and comprehend an object that is infinite: The sole business of reason in this case is to examine and judge of the evidence that is brought to prove that

any

any proposition about the nature of God is clearly revealed by himself; for whatever is so revealed, we are certain is true, tho' we cannot conceive how it can be so; and therefore 'tis absurd and impertinent to argue here from reason and the nature of the thing, when the object is allow'd to be incomprehensible. The pride and vain glory of scholars, ambitious of raising a name, is a frequent cause of error and heresy. Many other texts of Scripture produc'd, that prove Christ's Divinity, and the answers of the Arians expos'd as arbitrary and unreasonable. They allow the attributes of God, his Immensity, Omniscience, Omnipresence and Eternity to be certain and indubitable, tho'tis as clear that they cannot comprehend them: Why then is their assent not as much due to any proposition concerning the intrinsic nature of God, when it is sufficiently revealed, tho' they cannot conceive the causes and Manner of it. Instances of Arian dissimulation and Equivocation.

Behold



Ehold we still advance, and push the foe,
 Affail his bulwarks, and their weak-
 nefs show ;

Vanquish'd by Scripture to the schools he flies,
 And deep entrench'd in metaphysics lies ;
 Begirt with nice distinctions, glosses, words
 And phrases foreign to divine records.
 Here the disputers of this world defy
 The Gospel, arm'd with vain philosophy.
 With idle labour they their Batt'ries dress,
 And Christian revelation to oppress,
 With smoke and vapour thence their engines play,
 And aim to stifle pure celestial Day.
 By rules scholastick teaching men to think
 Of things inspir'd, they inspiration sink ;
 And to mysterious truth immortal foes,
 Dim reason's light to that from heav'n oppose.

See, some of these great Sages ne'er pretend
 A being unconfin'd to comprehend,
 But grant that God's perfections are too high,
 Too deep for mortals fully to descry (a):
 Yet inconsistent with themselves, they dive,
 Amidst this vast abyss, and daring strive
 To search its secrets by a bold descent,
 Examine wide infinitude's extent,
 And arrogant determine where they own
 The boundless object never can be known.
 Others who better with themselves agree,
 Presumptuous say, they grasp infinity
 With finite reason, that their thoughts can soar
 To endless heights, and depths immense explore,
 While they can form conceptions in their mind
 Commensurate to essence unconfin'd.

(a) Job. xi. 7, &c.

And hence, say they, we nothing will believe
 Of the great Being, which we can't conceive:
 Since they the Mind Eternal understand,
 (So they affirm) they petulant demand,
 When of his secret nature we dispute,
 Reasons and proofs, which their ideas suit;
 That will convincing demonstration bring,
 And shew, as well the manner, as the thing.
 Will these, who such a conscious compass vaunt,
 And, that they fully know th' Almighty grant,
 His attributes unbounded disbelieve,
 Till they conceptions adequate receive?
 Presumptuous folly! to himself alone
 God's nature and perfections must be known;
 Yet vain disputers will to things intrude,
 Which reason at its utmost stretch elude,
 Would, what's above their sphere, attempt to clasp,
 And strive with objects, which they cannot grasp;

BOOK VI. A DIVINE POEM. 301

By metaphysick speculations try
Th' Almighty's hidden nature to descrie,
And up to heights interminable flie.
But groping in th' inextricable maze,
Giddy and dazzled by too strong a blaze
Of awful glory, they bewilder'd stray,
And guideless strive in vain to find their way,
And yet the notions, which their scheme promote,
Th' obscure conjectures of a daring thought
Concerning God, as certain they conclude,
And on the world, as truths divine, obtrude.

He, who the revelation owns, yet brings
The sacred truths and high mysterious things
Of Christian faith, which heav'nly light reveals,
To reason's bar, to a wrong court appeals.
For reason, reason's self being judge, by laws,
That rule her province, can't decide the cause.

Since

Since spirits are to man so little known,
 Not only those without us, but our own,
 As well their essence, as their properties,
 And hidden intellectual springs; the wise,
 Who search for sacred truth, will ne'er rely
 On dark decisions of philosophy.
 Religion's controverted points, resolv'd
 Into scholastick maxims, are involv'd
 In doubt and mist, to which with diffident
 And fluctuating minds we yield assent.
 Nor does religion her true force express,
 And beauties in a metaphorick dress,
 But is suspected much, if not despis'd,
 When by the schoolman's subtile arts disguis'd.

The Christian founder first religion fixt
 Clear, and with vain philosophy unmixt,

BOOK VI. A DIVINE POEM. 303

And did his laws in easy language teach,
Such as the swain and fisherman could reach:
Now Christian churches were with concord
crown'd,
Blameless in manners and in doctrine sound,
Their piety and ardent mutual love
Did 'midst the nations admiration move;
Vertue and goodness was their generous aim;
They did their hearts, their lives and doctrines frame,
For sure attainment of immortal bliss
In the succeeding world, and peace in this:
Nor tried by feeble reason to unfold
Doctrines sublime in sacred writ enroll'd,
Mysterious points of unfurmounted height;
That might the most audacious wit affright,
Which they, because reveal'd, receiv'd as true,
Tho' none the mode and secret manner knew.

In

304 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK VI.

In this primæval state, this golden age,
 E'er party-strife did Christian realms engage,
 The zeal, that every vot'ry's mind engross,
 Was, who should raise their founder's glory most;
 Instincts corrupt and blameful passions quell,
 And in blest works of charity excel.
 At length the *Greeks* by national dispute
 Trouble the fountain, and the streams pollute
 Of faith divine, which by this inlet grew
 Thick and disturb'd, and fatal ferments knew.
 Hence from the schools did spreading fogs arise
 And clouds of learning darken'd Christian skies.
 And now the Saviour's uncontested creed,
 Simple, unmix'd and from vain glosses freed,
 By wits explained did explanation need.
 Doctrines embrac'd as clear, as well as pure,
 Grew by inept philosophy obscure,

While

While its proud teachers furious did invade
The peaceful church, and vast confusion made.
Now points divine, that plainly were reveal'd,
All for salvation necessary held,
In speculation's subtilties involv'd,
And novel doubts too hard to be resolv'd,
Became the labour of the strongest mind,
And far above all vulgar reach refin'd.
When oft th' aggressor heretick employ'd
The sophists reach'rous learning, to avoid
The force of heav'nly truth, and undermine
This most important article divine,
That *Christ* is God; the orthodox in course
Constrain'd oppos'd scholastick force to force.
The church, where now philosophy grew rise,
Became a scene of academick strife,

306 *REDEMPTION*: Book VI.

A field of disputation, where they fought
 With arms and armour forg'd by studious thought,
 And in the college by the Sages wrought,
 Thus the corrupters of the Christian creed
 Call'd in the schools to justify the deed;
 And then, as said, compell'd the faithful strove,
 By the same means th' assailants to remove,
 And vindicate high mysteries, which before,
 Because reveal'd from heav'n, they did adore,
 But aim'd not depths unbounded to explore.

When first her heav'nly head religion rear'd,
 She lovely and adorable appear'd;
 Her charms, and artless beauties, overcame
 The realms around, and high advanc'd her fame:
 But when new form'd and model'd in the schools,
 By *Grecian* modes and philosophick rules,

Her

Her face disguis'd in academick airs
 And all her bosom fill'd with subtile snares,
 New systems and distinctions in her hand,
 While loud disputers did around her stand,
 She soon perceiv'd, by learning's base allay
 Her glory sicken, and her strength decay;
 With grief the wise did this strange medley see
 Of revelation and philosophy.

They judg'd that reason's light we should persue;
 To prove the Christian institution true;
 And to acquire this end, they rightly thought
 The needful aids of learning should be sought;
 But judg'd not finite reason qualified
 Concerning boundless objects to decide.
 What God, who only his own being knows,
 The glorious fountain, whence all science flows,

Speaks of his nature, we as true aver,
 Because the God of truth can never err :
 But here we stop, and dare not farther press,
 And those, who these just limits shall transgress,
 Lost in a labyrinth, their aim will miss,
 And soon be swallow'd in a dark abyss.

See, how ambitious scholars pant for fame,
 And the sweet pleasure of a leader's name :
 How praises to their inmost soul are dear
 With what delight the list'ning doctors hear
 Their friends their flatt'ring admiration vent,
 Extoll their genius, as of vast extent,
 Their matchless sense, clear reason, parts acute,
 Learning profound and triumph in dispute :
 This is enough to swell with pride the Sage,
 And make him all his strength and skill engage,

To cultivate some novel scheme, and strive
To raise new sects, or old ones to revive.

This passion soon 'midst Christians was observ'd,
Who from pure truth by ways so num'rous swerv'd,
That they profuse the stock of error spent,
And left no schism for followers to invent;
Hence modern wits, who eagerly are set,
Glory by novel sentiments to get,
And plant a sect distinguish'd by their name,
Are disappointed of their way to fame.
By ancestors worn out th'impoverish'd field
Of heresy will no fresh harvest yield;
None at a founder's honour can arrive,
But must submit old falshood to revive;
Ancient exploded notions to restore,
And only say what has been said before.

310 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK VI.

Socinus and his friends must be content

To own, *Sabellius* did their scheme invent ;

Our *Arians* too, who *Arius* would disclaim,

Must, tho' reluctant, bear th' apostate's name,

Alike their creed, their arguments the same.

This must be shocking to th' ambitious mind,

That would by toil and flights unvulgar find

Some error's haunt, discover'd yet by none,

And some wild coast of heresy unknown.

Our subject now with ardor to pursue,

And prove the *Anti-arian* doctrine true,

We'll vindicate our cause from hardy foes,

Who Christian faith's important points oppose,

To whom, not force, but subtilties belong,

Feeble in reason, tho' in passion strong.

Proud words they utter, with defiance vain,

Which low and humble sentiments contain.

Some-

Sometimes fallacious arguments they use,
 And with deceitful shews of truth amuse ;
 Sometimes their word does reason's room supply,
 While we on *Arian* honour must rely ;
 They still are more and more perplex'd, the fate
 Of metaphysick jugglers in debate.
 Then since bold scholars from the grave would free
 A long since dead and buried heresy,
 'Tis fit, that we with pious ardor bent,
 The monster's resurrection to prevent,
 In Scripture arms should grapple with the foes,
 And argument to argument oppose :
 Th' undaunted arm will be with honour crown'd,
 That shall this fierce reviving *Hydra* wound,
 And leave his sever'd heads expiring on the ground.

*

(b) *I am the Lord, I am the Lord alone,*
And I am God, besides me there is none ;
Is there a God besides me ? surely no :
There is no God ; nor do I any know.
See, I am God, to me none likeness has,
There was none ever form'd before I was,
Nor after me shall be : hence is it shown,
That God besides himself no god will own.
That he is God alone, see, more than once
His words express and absolute pronounce :
Mean time the books inspir'd, that cannot err,
And which must be consistent, oft aver (c) !
That Christ is God ; then who can Christians blame,
Who say, since each is God, they are the same ?

(b) Isa. xlii. 8. xliii. 10. xlv. 6 & 8. xlv. 5, 21, 22.

(c) Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 12. 2 Cor. v. 10.

What we advance will *Arian* chiefs denie?

No; they a word important will supplie,

A word to them most necessary there,

Which God to mention did, it seems, forbear;

They say not why; and by that term annex

They fill and cure the lame deficient text.

The word supreme is what the *Arians* want;

And if this needful supplement you grant,

Then all the cited scriptures thus will run,

God will allow no God supreme but one;

And thus they clear their way, and make these
texts their own.

Thus they their usual modest method take,

They now substract, and now additions make,

Now hurtful words for favourable change,

Now texts in more convenient order range,

The

The greatest strength of Catholicks to break,
 And make them *Arian* sense reluctant speak.
 These arbitrary chiefs, that thus preside
 O'er Christian faith, and scripture-meaning guide,
 May safe engage, as certain to confute
 All who oppose, and triumph in dispute:
 For who can foes so privileged withstand,
 That books inspir'd to serve their cause command?

Tho' it were here sufficient to reply,
 That we, what they advance unprov'd, deny,
 Yet more these vain disputers to confound,
 And shew their answer stands on faithless ground,
 Suppose the term supreme should be allow'd
 To clear the Scriptures from a fancied cloud,
 And when 'tis said, that God is God alone,
 Tis meant, there is no God supreme but one,

Whom

I. BOOK VI. A DIVINE POEM. 315

Whom all submissive nations should obey,
Nor to more Gods supreme should worship pay;
Then let the word supreme be here annex,
And see, how this destroys the sacred text?
Behold no God supreme shall after me
Be form'd, that is, as all unbias'd see,
No uncreated God shall e'er created be.
If this will not convince the foe, what light,
What words express can set his Judgment right?
A strong delusion must possess his mind,
Obdurate, and by affectation blind.

But grant their gloss, and every reas'ner sees,
The worship paid to under-deities,
Th' abomination of the Pagan lands,
By God unblam'd and unforbidden stands.
Still *Ashtaroth's* high temples might arise,
And *Milcom's* guiltless altars fill the skies

With

316 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK VI.

With clouds of incense ; still the crowd might pay
Worship to *Chemosh*, and to *Baal* pray ;
Groves and high places had uncensur'd been,
Nor had the vot'ries there committed sin ;
For since they worship'd not more Gods supreme,
They are acquitted by the *Arian* scheme.
The Pagan realms were not so dark of mind,
Nor were *Judæa's* sons so dull and blind,
As to believe their Gods of wood and stone,
Were Gods supreme ; nor could they stupid own,
That idol-making artists did apply
Their tools, to carve the Deity most high.
Egypt, at least thy sons could never think,
That in the *Nile* they us'd their God to drink,
Nor in their savoury leeks and onions eat
The God supreme, and made him daily meat.

The prophet's words, which above cited stand,
 Repeat and reinforce the first command (e),
 Which by th' Almighty plainly was design'd,
 Most strictly to oblige all human kind,
 From him estrang'd, and much to idols prone,
 To pay divine respect to him alone.
 To make them wholly on his care depend,
 To him their pray'rs, to him their praises send,
 Prostrate alone before his throne to fall,
 And only on his awful name to call :
 That empty idols they might not adore,
 Fear their displeasure, or their help implore,
 Should not for gifts divine on them rely,
 Nor for their favour and protection cry,
 Nor to their mercy for salvation fly.

(e) Exod. xx. 3.

Soon after *Adam's* fall, corrupt mankind
 Left the sole service of th' Eternal Mind,
 And set up various under-deities,
 And to the worship and belief of these,
 That then prevail'd, th' Almighty had regard,
 And by his first command their progress bar'd.
 This was th' idolatry, that God design'd
 His law against; for we no other find,
 Since none did more divinities revere,
 As Gods supreme, but as of lower sphere,
 Subordinate and of inferior race,
 Gods by their office and vicegerent's place.

And now the sacred prophet's words regard,
 As with th' Apostle's sentiments compar'd.

" I in a vision did the Lord espy,
 " Sitting upon a throne uplifted high,
 " And of his robe the borders spread abroad
 " Magnificent o'er all the temple flow'd :
 " The seraphim, attendants on the throne,
 " Above in order stood, and every one
 " Had twice three wings, he hid his face with two,
 " With two his feet, and with a pair he flew :
 " These seraphim, that swift his will obey'd,
 " To one another cry'd aloud, and said,
 " O holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts,
 " Thy glory fills the earth's remotest coasts.

No hardy *Arian* leader will deny,
 That here the mention'd Lord is God most high;
 Who oft to prophets, seated on a throne,
 Awful appear'd, as sacred pages own.

(f) Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3, &c. compar'd with John xii. 40, 41.

Now

320 *REDEMPTION:* BOOK VI.

Now does th' inspir'd evangelist record,
 That this great person was the Saviour Lord,
 Whose glory in his trance the prophet saw,
 And of him spoke with reverential awe.
 Then he must shew an inbred strong desire
 To deviate from the truth, that shall require
 Yet clearer evidence, to prove the Word
 Is God supreme, of Lords th' Almighty Lord.

His greatness by the prophet is proclaim'd (g),
 The wonderful, the Counsellor he's nam'd,
 The mighty God, whose being cannot cease,
 E'erlasting Father, and the Prince of peace.
 In these united appellations see
 Asserted clear our Lord's Divinity:

(g) Isa. ix. 6.

The

The mighty God, which always is confin'd
To the most high, was never once assign'd
To any creature of the noblest kind.

So *everlasting* and *eternal* claim
The same construction, and are still the same:
For *everlasting* in the Scripture-phrase,
Denotes a being that for ever was:

And the name us'd for *Christ* was us'd for none
But great JEHOVAH, God supreme alone,
Nor to express a creature is it known.

We, that the Son of God is God most high,
On evidence that cannot err rely;
The God of truth this mystery has reveal'd,
Who his own nature only knows, conceal'd
From all in heaven and earth; for who can find
God to Perfection out, a boundless mind?

We then assert *Christ's* god-head, tho' to none
The mode of consubstantial can be known.

Yet this essential union does as clear,
As God's acknowledged attributes appear,
Which like his nature far surpasses the reach
Of human reason at its utmost stretch.
See, we divine ubiquity defend,
But who can this perfection comprehend?
What mind of this can just ideas boast,
Where all imagination's force is lost?
How can an incorporeal simple god
Not form'd of parts be vastly spread abroad?
And if he were diffus'd, we must allow,
That such expansion could no limits know:
Now an expansion ignorant of bounds
The most extensive faculty confounds.

A reverend Sage, whose pen has met applause
 From all, who patronize the *Arian* cause,
 Does God an out-spread under-stratum place,
 That still sustains and under-props all space,
 Which with him co-extends its empty face.

To geometrick words why this respect,
 When metaphysick you, you say, reject?
 Howe'er those words, with which you us upbraid
 Your selves use freely, when you want their aid,
 As shall hereafter be apparent made.

Person, Subsistence, Consubstantial, these
 Are terms scholastick, which your ear displease;
 Because not Scripture-phrase; yet you apply
 The term *Substratum* to the Deity;
 A word as foreign to the Scripture-style,
 As a *West-Indian* from an *Eastern* isle.

They, who this new hypothesis embrace,
 And spread forth God a *stratum* under space,
 And by inept philosophy would fain
 Th' Almighty's vast immensity explain,
 Must lame, confus'd and dark ideas teach,
 While they the object own above their reach.
 How despicably weak great masters are?
 What children learned Sages, when they dare
 Adventure to unfold infinity,
 And make their scholars omnipresence see?

And God's eternity, they must confess,
 They are as much unable to express,
 Of which an explanation none can give,
 And no conception form but negative.
 They have of this no just idea got,
 Nor tell us what it is, but what 'tis not.

What is duration, which no bounds attend,
 Without beginning and without an end?
 To represent its nature if we chuse
 The constant Now, or long succession use,
 See, what amazing difficulties stand,
 What heights, what depths affright on either hand?
 Succession, which still grows before our thought,
 And multiplies, th' idea can't promote :
 For unconfin'd succession must suppose
 Parts infinite, which reason overthrows.
 But if we grant the celebrated Now,
 Which ever stands unmoveable, then how
 Does time unmangled in its rapid race
 Roll off from vast duration's stagnant face?
 Who can an image form of present vast,
 Exclusive of all future and all past?
 Who can produce conceptions in the mind
 Of two eternities by time disjoin'd,

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By bounded time, whose swift interfluent tide
 Unlimited duration does divide,
 Æquator-like into two hemispheres,
 Of which each section equally appears
 To man's conception wide and unconfin'd,
 One past eternity, and one behind?
 Now does not this surpass all reason's reach,
 As much as when our Christian doctors teach,
 Guided by sacred revelation's light,
 That three distinguished in one God unite?
 Nor can the wit of man with more success
 Explain th' Eternal Mind's Almightyness:
 Now God's intrinsic nature, tis agreed,
 Our comprehension farther must exceed.
 Wetherefore should, with pure and ardent zeal,
 Maintain whate'er he pleases to reveal
 Of his own essence, tho' we cannot show
 How what's reveal'd can possibly be so.

Nor

Nor is it wonder, that a finite mind
Should not conceive a being unconfin'd
By space or time, nor objects comprehend,
Which all created faculties transcend.

Then here let *Arian* wits their reason try,
Socinian leaders to this task apply ?
Let them these wond'rous attributes unfold,
And by good proof and evidence uphold
A scheme, where we these mysteries clear may see,
And chiefly this of vast eternity ;
And we in turn will undertake to show,
How they the manner may as clearly know
Of three in one, you'll stile them as you please,
Distinctions, persons or subsistences.
But if they cannot this hard task sustain,
Unjustly they our faith divine arraign,

328 *REDEMPTION*: BOOK VI.

While we on revelation's light rely,
 For lofty truths, which reason's reach defy.
 If we exert our force, our sinews strain,
 T' unfold th' Almighty's attributes in vain,
 Can we his nature infinite explain?
 Presumptuous proud philosophers pretend,
 To search unfathom'd depths, to comprehend
 Unmeasurable breadths, and aim to climb
 Heights for angelick labour too sublime.
 Audacious Sect, can you a Gulph explore
 Unconscious of a bottom or a shore?
 A being of unbounded excellence,
 Who knows no center nor circumference?
 Should it be granted, that a finite mind
 Could fully grasp an object unconfined,
 And of th' Almighty equal thoughts enjoy,
 It would th' idea of a God destroy.

Then

Then arrogant and trifling wits in vain;
 Ask us th' Eternal's nature to explain,
 Unfold the union of the sacred Three,
 And make it with philosophy agree.
 Do you, who forc'd by reason's light believe,
 That some things are, tho' reason can't conceive
 How they should be, to us the freedom grant
 Of doing thus, when we that favour want.

The *Jews* accus'd the Saviour Lord, that he
 Claim'd with the God supreme equality;
 Nor did he that high dignity disown,
 But had he not been God, he must have shown,
 They grossly had mistaken what he meant;
 For this became a sacred prophet, sent
 To teach men truth, and error to prevent.

That

That he is God, it must be hence avow'd,
 Or else he can't so much as be allow'd
 To be a Man with probity endow'd;
 Who language us'd adapted to deceive
 The hearer, and induce him to believe,
 That he his real deity aver'd,
 Nor would inform them rightly when they err'd.
 Let *Arians* then, with this dilemma prest,
 Embrace the question's side, that pleases best;
 They must assert more Gods supreme than one,
 Th' Almighty Father and th' Almighty Son;
 Or that in substance they must be the same,
 And but distinct in person and in name.

By different ways *Sectarians* undermine
 The blest Redeemer's attributes divine:
 They now at Scripture's high tribunal stand,
 And tryal with disdainful airs demand,

And

And then to make the sacred pages back
 Their cause, they stretch them on the critick's rack,
 And wrest them, till concessions they extort
 Their Anti-christian doctrines to support.
 But if they find their arts evasive fail,
 And that o'er light reveal'd they can't prevail,
 Of books inspir'd the sentence they defy
 Appeal to Scripture, and from Scripture fly.
 The disputants compell'd to change the field,
 Breath new defiance, arms offensive wield
 Form'd in the schools, and against scripture bring
 Vain reasons from the nature of the thing;
 Of which our reason cannot judge, for here
 Whene'er it acts, it acts above its sphere,
 While they illusive metaphysicks use,
 They geometrick rules as well might chuse;
Euclid to fix redemption's scheme apply,
 And revelation by the compass try.

In its own province reason we allow,
 With which th' Almighty did the mind endow
 To shew us moral precepts by its light,
 And how of objects fit to judge aright;
 But let it not attempt forbidden flight.
 Tis lost, if yet on farther search resolv'd,
 It is in vast immensity involv'd.
 While *Arians* quit the sacred books, the rules
 Of faith, and fly for shelter to the schools,
 Unscriptural distinctions they create,
 One God supreme and one subordinate;
 A ruler one by independent right,
 A Vice-god one by delegated might;
 A subject, finite, creature-deity,
 Who might, if that should please his maker, see
 Corruption, and for ever cease to be.
 Thus they imagine two eternal, one,
 Who had beginning, one who ne'er begun,

Two Gods distinct they lay down in debate,
 A God by nature this, by office that.
 Tho' now some leaders are so hardy grown,
 That they the Son will God by nature own,
 But in a sense equivocal they use
 That term, and thus ev'n cautious ears amuse.
 And thus God's nature metaphysical
 And relative, a difference hid to all
 Past writers, is by art scholastick made
 The force of Scripture-doctrine to evade.
 See, how the foes to nice distinctions fly,
 And on the schoolmens cobweb strength rely,
 While their opposers shameless they upbraid,
 That they depend on metaphysick aid,
 And that with terms of learning they abound,
 Terms in the sacred volumes never found.

Hence

Hence it is clear no terms, no ties remain,
 That can these slippery disputants restrain,
 Who mock all faith in words, all tests defy,
 And treach'rous turn our language to a lie.
 With the words God, Eternal, Nature, they
 Thus in important subjects wanton play,
 And faithless from that sense and meaning break,
 Which custom here authentick makes them speak.

Sagacious Sages, miracles of men!
 Who clearly have discovered all again
 Long since made known, and with sharp sight
 explore,
 And find new worlds of knowledge, which before
Arius their prince, and chiefs of *Arian* taste
 Had publish'd plain so many ages past!

Nor can these leaders make the least pretence
 To reason's new or stronger evidence.
 Thus *Arius* from his grave does daring rise,
 Once more in arms the catholick defies,
 And with his vanquish'd forces takes the field,
 But does no fresh, nor keener weapons wield?
 Nor has he more or braver troops enroll'd
 To spread his empire, and his pow'r uphold,
 Than those he us'd, who by superior might
 Routed a thousand times were put to flight:
 Hence we our conquests only can repeat,
 And o'er and o'er his beaten forces beat.

Farther to press the foe, these words we quote (b),
 He in the form of God existing, thought
 He shew'd no arrogance, nor robbery wrought

(b) Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

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*To be with God coequal, when he took
A servant's form, and his high throne forsook,
And made mankind with scorn upon him look:*

*And now behold, obedient he became
To death, ev'n of the cross, to death and shame.*

Now while the form of God plain texts oppose
To that of servant, this undoubted shows,
That *Christ* was real God, e'er time began,
In the same sense, that he was real man.

Nature divine to him must be allow'd,
As he with human nature was endow'd;

The word, which form is render'd, signifies
The real nature, and the thing implies.

'Tis an idea of distinguish'd sort,
And more than mere appearance does import
Or show, whence in the form of God to be,
Is understood, to be the deity.

Scarce will these cited Scriptures diff'rent found,
If we another way their sense expound :

Who being of the form of God possess'd,

That is, was God himself for ever bless'd,

And therefore might his glories all display'd,

An entrance to the world triumphant made ;

Yet, when conset in flesh, chose to decline

The shew of pow'r and majesty divine ;

And low himself debas'd, veil'd and conceal'd

His bright immortal beauties, not reveal'd

His dignity, nor greatness spread abroad,

But emptied, as it were, himself of God,

And of a servant did the form assume,

Or, what's the same, did real man become.

This text, that does the form of God oppose

To that of man, with light convincing shows,

To all, who will the phrase attentive scan,
 That *Christ* was real God, as he was real man.
 What will the *Arian* sophists here invent,
 To break the force of this clear argument,
 Criticks, who like the demons of the air,
 The ministers of darkness, mists prepare
 And fogs of gloomy glosses, which display
 Invented night, to stifle Scripture-day?

(i) *Who of his glory is th' effulgence bright,
 The shining forth of uncreated light,
 The image of his person most express;
 Which likeness and distinction must confess.
 Here to what refuge will opposers fly?
 Will they some words expunge, or some supply,
 Or change their order, stops, or all deny?*

(i) Heb. i. 3.

Some

Some of these useful arts must be employ'd,
Or the whole *Arian* scheme will be destroy'd,
Which owns another like th' eternal mind,
A god that's form'd, and of the creature kind.

(k) *And who shall our vile bodies change, and
make*

*Them, like his own, a glorious fashion take,
By the great pow'r, by which he can subdue
Ev'n all things to himself: Then Christ can do
All things, and then must be omnipotent,
And therefore God supreme, as here is meant.
What will reply our masters of defence,
Wresters of texts, and foes of obvious sense,
Explainers, who imagin'd doubts to solve,
In studied darkness Scripture-light involve?*

(k) Phil. iii. 20, 21.

See what th' Apostle does inspir'd declare (l)
Howbeit, when to God you strangers were,
You serv'd them, who no gods by nature are.

Now how are they determin'd not, to know,
 And what unfeeling hardness do they show,
 Who wrapt in black judicial *Arian* night
 Cannot perceive so full, so strong a light?
 What words can set it in a clearer view,
 That worship, strictly call'd divine, is due
To God by nature, and to him alone (m)?
 But *Christ* as such did *Arians* never own,
 Till some, who proudly on their wit depend,
 And fond in disputation to defend
 Points most absurd, now so presumptuous grow,
 That they this bulwark hope to overthrow.

(l) Gal. iv. 8.

(m) Ibid.

See, resolute they ardent zeal express,
 By violence plain Scripture to suppress,
 Break thro' all bounds of modesty, and fly
 To ignominious shifts, and thus reply.
 That *Christ* is God by nature, we believe,
 Since he from God, his maker, did receive
 That nature, which this creature qualified
 As prince o'er subject empires to preside,
 With borrow'd subaltern authority;
 And thus a Scripture-god by nature see,
 Who from deriv'd dominion such is stil'd,
 And they who worship him are undefil'd.

Labour'd equivocation, matchless shame!
 No longer let these *Arian* leaders blame
 Th' *Ignatian* faithless priest, that truth betrays
 By double meanings and ambiguous phrase.

This text may then triumphant stand secure,
 The bold assaults of heresy endure,
 And all the force of party-rage defy,
 If this be all their champions can reply.
 Those wits, endow'd with strange expounding parts,
 Place all their hopes in known evasive arts,
 Who hardy undertake, when close persud,
 Thus *Anti-arian* Scriptures to elude.

Give such a boundless liberty to strain
 The sacred volumes, and by force explain
 The Scriptures, thus against all reason's laws,
 That they compell'd may serve th'expounder's cause,
 All evidence, all certainty is gone,
 Nothing can be discover'd, nothing known:
 Again thy school, exploded *Pyrrho*, thrives,
 And *Grecia's* new academy revives.

The use of words is arbitrary made,
 By which no longer truth can be convey'd,
 While every reader may a right assert,
 By fraud or force their meaning to pervert,
 But this is light and reason to deride,
 Nor to confute, but mock the adverse side:
 Thus they insult us with despotick sway,
 And bid us to their judgments reverence pay,
 Renounce our own, and their decrees obey.
 Those, who for truth unfeign'd enquiry make,
 In points important to prevent mistake,
 Should mind, how *Arian* wits equivocate,
 And shuffle, thro' the whole of this debate.

Ask them, if they the Saviour God believe,
 They say they do, but say it to deceive;

For with our God they never mean the same,
 But one inferior, made, who that great name
 Does by his high vicarious office claim.
 Th' equivocators likewise will allow,
 That *Christ* is real, proper God; but how?
 Why he is proper God, and truly so,
 By the deputed pow'rs, that on him flow
 From the great God, the independent Spring
 Of all dominion, and of kings the King.
 That *Christ* is God by nature, some will say,
 But own it in a strain'd perfidious way
 Explain'd before; nor will they disagree
 To the blest Saviour *Christ*'s eternity;
 But then they mean, that none the point can state,
 Or fix the time, when God did *Christ* create;
 Or that, since time with the made world begun,
 And first with rolling orbs his race did run,

The Saviour may eternal be, because
 Before creation and all time he was,
 Thus fast and loose they faithless play with words,
 To shun the light plain evidence affords;
 They artful give, to strengthen their defence,
 To catholick expressions *Arian* sense:
 Nor can the strongest demonstration's chain
 These shifting, loose, inconstant wits restrain.
 For still the *Arian Proteus*, to escape,
 Varies at pleasure his illusive shape,

Now let me thus these disputants address,
 No more your thoughts in doubtful phrase express;
 Your meaning to conceal no longer fence
 With labour'd shifts, and words of double sense:
 Throw off the mask, and lay disguises by,
 No more entrench'd in terms ambiguous lie,
 Nor to maim'd texts and far fetch'd glosses flie.

Leave

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Leave these strong holds, and generous take the
field,

And no unjust and treach'rous weapons wield;

Away with subtile artifice, appear

In a true light, and dare to be sincere,

For truth is bold, and ignorant of fear.

Affect not darkness, no school-language use,

Nor men with vain philosophy amuse.

Dismiss collusion, scorn the juggler's art,

And act an undissembled open part.

No more with words equivocal deceive;

But speak out plainly, whether you beleive

That the blest Lord by Christian realms obey'd

Is God supreme, or but a being made.

The principles, as to the world is known,

Which God the Son undeify, you own:

*

Of granting that conclusion you are shy,
Nor say he is a creature, nor deny;
Who cannot see your coward reason why?

Happy the Sage, that reason's weakness knows,
And wary thence in speculation grows,
Who to be safe, along the breezy shore
Runs on smooth water, nor will with his oar
And feeble bark adventure to explore
The boundless deep, where terrify'd he'll find
Surges and whirl-pools of amazing kind,
Split on the rocks, or drive before the wind.



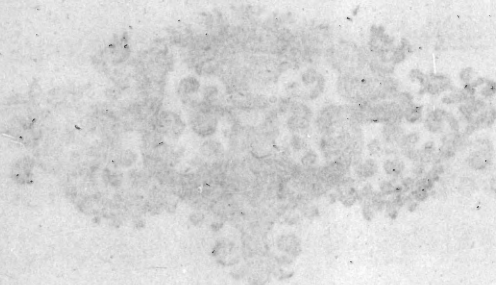
A H Y M N

Of granting that condition you are free
Not say he is a creature, nor deny
We cannot see your coward reason why?

Happy the sage, that reason's weakness knows
And way hence in speculation grows

Who to be late, along the dreary shore
Runs on limbo's waste, nor will with his own
And reckless bark adventure to explore

The bottom's deep, where rarely 'd he'll find
Surge and whirl-pools of amazing kind
Split on the rocks, or drive before the wind





A

H Y M N

TO

CHRIST the REDEEMER.



H Y M N

TO
CHRIST the REDEEMER



A
H Y M N
T O
CHRIST the REDEEMER.



AIL, Lord Redeemer, God for ever
blest,

Of pow'r and goodness unconfin'd
possest!

Vital effulgence, emanation bright,

Pure and immortal, from the source of light!

H Y M N

TO
CHRIST the REDEEMER.



In whom the Father of the Godhead dwells

HYMN

TO

CHRIST the REDEEMER.



AIL, Lord Redeemer, God for ever
blest,

Of pow'r and goodness unconfin'd
possest!

Vital effulgence, emanation bright,

Pure and immortal, from the source of light!

2

A

A coessential uncreated beam
Of self-existent glory, filial stream,
That necessary flows, not caus'd, from thee
O Blissful Fountain of the Deity !
Who thee in might and majesty excells,
In whom the fulness of the God-head dwells
Unspeakable, thou image full of grace,
And clear expression of the Father's face ?

The vacant regions of th' unbounded deep,
Where worlds did yet in non-existence sleep,
And the dark walks of solitary night,
Pregnant became by thy creative might.
Matter yet formless, crude and unrefin'd,
And the primæval seeds of various kind,
Did from the gulphs unfathomable hear
Thy voice, and rising from the void appear.

Thou

Thou didst th' etherial azure chambers build ;
 Thy hands the skies with orbs illustrious fill'd,
 And puff'd them on with such impulsive force,
 As gave them their unerring endless course.
 As thou didst heav'n's unmeasur'd fields extend,
 Thou didst the pond'rous earth in air suspend :
 At thy command the mountains rear'd their heads,
 And confluent waters sought their central beds.
 Thou spak'st, and up the groves embattled flood,
 And thro' the meadow ran the mazy flood ;
 Thou badst dark vapours rise and spread the sky,
 And gav'st to winds their breath and wings to fly :
 Thy hands the flats and airy downs display'd ;
 Thou the vast world, and all things there hast made
 Seraphick pow'rs and potentates divine,
 And chiefs, that clad in robes immortal shine,
 Thrones and dominions, being to thee owe ;
 From thee their bliss and high perfections flow :

They thee their author, thee their sov'reign own,
And low adoring bow before thy throne.
These glorious beings, who in heav'n abide,
Or guardians o'er terrestrial realms preside,
Bright envoys wing'd with flame, at thy command,
Fly swift from heav'n to earth, from land to land,
To drive malignant demons of the air,
Protect thy people their peculiar care,
And guard each sacred house of praise and pray'r.

In the beginning, from all ages past,
E'er ambient skies the finish'd world embrac'd,
E'er yet the lucid orbs did roll sublime,
Or to aerial heights the mountains climb,
Before thro' heav'n's unfolded gates the Sun
Sprung like a mighty giant forth, to run
His destin'd race, or new-born time display'd
His untry'd wings, and his first flight essay'd,

Thou

Thou wast with God, and thou thy self wast God;
And in his bosom hadst thy blest abode.

When man seduc'd by Satan's guileful art
Did disobedient from the rule depart
Prescrib'd by heav'n, and by that bold offence
Fell from his blisful state of innocence,
And did by guilt omnipotence provoke;
Thou, from his head to turn the threaten'd stroke,
Didst gracious interpose, resolv'd to pay
His ransom; and uplifted vengeance stay;
Thou, to effect thy merciful decree,
Didst condescend to veil thy majesty,
And quit thy robes, that to an angel's sight
Display'd thro' heav'n unsufferable light:
Thou didst from marks of dignity refrain,
Fold up thy bright unmeasurable train

Of uncreated glory, and decline

Immortal pomp and equipage divine.

Thou, whom the heav'n of heav'ns could not
contain,

Who didst for ever unmolested reign,

Enthron'd on tow'rs sublime of convex sky,

Wast in the glorious form of God most high,

And didst no robb'ry, no presumption see,

In owning with him thy equality;

Yet gracious, for a hardy rebel's sake,

Thou didst the form of man a servant take,

And humbly didst submit to bear the loss,

Of life, extended on a shameful cross:

Amazing instance of benevolence!

Unfathomable depths and heights immense

Of goodness! mercy ignorant of bounds!

And condescension, which all thought confounds!

Well might blest seraphs congregated shine
In long array on heav'n's high frontier-line,
And stoop with eager eyes, to see, and trace
This mystic scheme, this miracle of grace.

Thou by a vital tie ineffable
With human nature didst embodied dwell:
The dumb, by thee grown vocal, grateful prais'd
Thy mighty pow'r ; and creeping cripples rais'd
In joyful dances loud extoll'd thy name,
And men, when thou hadst quench'd their fever's
flame,
Now burn'd with zeal to propagate thy fame.
The blind, by thee freed from coeval night,
Thee the first object saw, thou Lord of light ;
The slumb'ring dead heard and obey'd thy call,
While death's unweildy chains asunder fall.

Thou glorious sun of righteousness didst rise,
And with thy orb adorn *Judea's* skies,
Whence by thy lustre, heat and influence,
Thou didst ten thousand benefits dispense.
The land around, from thy prolifick beams
Receiving life, with blest productions teems,
A godlike offspring from celestial feed,
Which genial dews from heav'n descending feed.
Thy conqu'ring rays put gloomy shades to flight,
And o'er the realms diffus'd reviving light,
Which issuing from a burst of glory, blest
The lands, from pole to pole, from east to west.
The nations, long with darkness overspread,
Saw truth immortal rear her starry head,
And now by thee inlightned glad embrac'd
Her heavenly precepts, in their minds defac'd.

Thee

Thee on thy progress kings submissive meet,
And cast their crowns and scepters at thy feet:
The judges of the earth thy aid implore,
And laurel'd victors vanquish'd thee adore:
The purple pow'rs, that *Rome's* proud scepter sway'd,
And who their chains on captive princes laid,
Receive thy milder yoke, revere thy throne,
And, to encrease thy empire, add their own:
An empire, which thy armies did not gain,
Not purchas'd by the blood of thousands slain,
But by thy own; an empire o'er the mind
Erected, and for heavenly ends design'd.
Thus thou thy royal portion didst possess,
And with just laws thy willing people bless;
Thou gracious didst advance to dignity
Sublime thy vo'tries from their low degree,

And mad'st them kings and priests to God most
high,

Who firm on thy unerring word rely,
That soon an endless kingdom shall be theirs,
Of thy salvation uncontested heirs.

That thou might'st raise to heav'n man's sinful
race,

Thou here on earth thy glory didst debase;

That he restor'd might God's lost smiles regain,

Thou didst his frowns and dreadful wrath sustain;

And life eternal for him to procure,

Didst ignominious painful death endure.

Thou, wondrous! didst become a man of woe

And care, and didst with grief familiar grow,

That he might joy and endless pleasure know.

Thou wast insulted and expos'd to scorn,

Spit on and scourg'd, and with a crown of thorn

Wounded

Wounded and mock'd, and by the world refus'd;
That midst celestial angels introduc'd
Men honours might enjoy that never end,
Triumph in bliss, and regal thrones ascend.

Death and the grave confess'd thy pow'r divine,
That forc'd by strength immortal did resign
Their three days tenant, which event renown'd
Thy miracles and all thy wonders crown'd;
Did of thy doctrine full belief create,
Of resurrection and the future state:
Then thou, great conqueror, thro' the steepy skies
Didst to the court of heav'n triumphant rise,
With Satan's spoils in glorious combat gain'd,
And sin and death reluctant captives chain'd;
Then guarded by a bright seraphick band,
Sat'st down enthron'd sublime on God's right hand,

Where

Where thou for thine dost pow'rfull interceed,
And, to ascertain their salvation, plead
The meritorious labours of thy life,
Thy sufferings on the cross, and dying strife;
Nor to the throne of God dost thou forbear
To offer up the incense of their pray'r.

Now since the Saviour has such wonders
wrought,
Such sufferings felt, and such redemption brought,
Let the whole world combin'd extoll his name,
And in loud anthems celebrate his fame.
Ye rivers, that refresh the meads, rejoice,
Ye cataracts and floods, lift up your voice,
In concert all your various sounds employ,
And praise the Saviour with confederate Joy.
Ye wide spread seas, with all your noisy waves,
Repell'd from rocks to rocks, from caves to caves,

Proclaim

Proclaim his praise for ever, nor to sleep

In silence to the creeks and havens creep.

Praise him, ye winds, that ventilate the air,

Shove floating rafts of clouds, and vig'rous bear

Black furnaces, where vengeance ripening lies,

The terror of the earth and labour of the skies.

Praise him each vapour, that to heav'n aspires,

Praise him, ye shooting stars and lambent fires:

Ye storms of thunder, with your awful sound

Make his loud praises ring in peals around.

Ye soaring eagles, who the earth despise,

Bold to the blazing sun undaunted rise,

And face his glory with undazled eyes.

Ye princes of the feather'd nations, raise

To heav'n, as you ascend, the Saviour's praise;

And all ye num'rous flying brotherhoods,

That roost in rocks and hills, or seek the floods,

That

That with your musick from the dewy grove
Salute the rising sun, and you that rove
From clime to clime, that high uplifted sing,
Or sweep the ouzy shore with easy wing,
Joyn'd with your chiefs, that dwell sublime in air,
Of praising *Christ*, the Lord, the honour share.

Ye whales, sea-giants vast, who, when you move,
Embroider the deep, and tides before you shove,
Lords of the wat'ry world, who lawless reign
O'er all the scaly clans, that range the main,
Let from your heads your native engines play,
Elastick spout whole seas up, and convey
To *Christ* your praises, and your tribute pay.
And you mute people, who your dwelling make
The running river or the standing lake,
With all the ocean's finny tribes combin'd,
For this great concert vocal organs find.

Ye golden groves, with generous fruits and flowers
At once adorn'd, ye complicated bowers
Of myrtle smelling sweet, ye trees renown'd,
That weep pure tears, or with rich sweat abound,
And spicy woods, to him your odours bring,
And all your incense offer to your King;
Ye cedars, which to heights aerial climb,
To him adoring bow your heads sublime.

Let all the savage monsters, that by day
Sleep in their dens, and hunt by night their prey,
The Saviour Lord with roaring voice confess,
And with loud praises shake the wilderness.

Ye elephants, that formidable bear
On castled backs whole hosts encamp'd in air,

*

To

Ye

To honour him, who did the nations save,
Flourish your iv'ry arms, and trunks prodigious wave:
And you proud lords of the swift-footed kind,
Who rapid leave the labouring storm behind,
When o'er the plains you fly, adoring low,
Your lofty groves of arboring antlets bow.
Ye wooly flocks, that cloath the mountain's side,
Ye fair-horn'd herds, the verdant vally's pride,
Ye various inmates of the shady woods,
All ye, that now the fields and now the floods
Amphibious seek; and thou vast crocodile,
Prince of this doubtful race, that dost the Nile
And land by turns frequent; your voices raise,
To celebrate the great Redeemer's praise.

Ye angels, sons of God, with glory crown'd,
Who lead his armies, or his throne surround,

*

Who

Who to the chrystal frontier of the sky,
To see the Saviour born, did eager fly,
All subjects of his spreading empire, sing
Loud hallelujahs, and extol your King :
And let all nature, which did sickning pine
At *Adam's* fall, in joyful praises join,
To bless her Lord, who ready and unsought,
Plenteous redemption to his offspring brought.

But chiefly men with gratitude inspir'd,
Who such salvation wondrous have acquir'd,
Salvation undeserv'd, and not desir'd,
Should in extatick strains of praise combine,
And rival heav'n's blest choir in songs divine.
Ye various pow'rs, who call upon his name,
Advance his glory, and divulge his fame ;
And by his people thro' the earth dispers'd,
With confluent voices be his praise rehears'd.

Let

Let all the congregations spread around,
Where guardian angels are attendants found,
In this blest work their pious ardor spend,
And to their Sa viour hallow'd anthems send;
Let their loud songs the sacred temples fill,
Ring thro' the vale, and eccho thro' the hill;
Let their united acclamations rise,
While these extarick accents reach the skies:
Salvation, empire, majesty and might,
Thanksgiving, pow'r and glory infinite,
To him, who sits high on his throne in heav'n,
And to the Lamb of God, be ever giv'n.

F I N I S

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

7M
LN
M